

FUEL DOWNCAST MAN LIFTING BANNER JUDGE ADMIRAL

I hate drugs, I hate alcohol, I hate cigarettes, I hate the users, and I hate the manufacturers. Consume it, never stop, never think, never disengage, just consume, consume, decay, and fry. Buy, buy, buy, and buy their enslavement. They profit from addiction, decay, and death, while you gladly lap it up as you fuel their network with your time, energy, money, and lives. Cloud your vision, waste your time, support the system, surrender your independence. Burn god damn it, burn. Go right ahead. Smoke the blood of a hundred thousand dead... drink the blood of dead Colombian judges, consume the lives of addicted dealers, shoot the souls of massacred Panamanians into your arm... your pleasure is crafted from the flesh of a million dead Central Americans. The dead in Argentina, Brazil, Hawaii, Mexico, Colombia, Bolivia, Pakistan, Chile, India, Honduras, Peru, Burma, Haiti, Thailand, Panama, inner city America, and hometown anywhere remain as vestiges of your lifestyle. They want to eat, they want to live, you want to fly, fry, and flare. Murder is your drug. Indulge yourself in their graves. Have no conscience, have no feelings, fix, fix, fix, appease your fix for fun... Their blood is not on your hands it is in your lungs, in your stomach, in your brain, and it pulses through your decadent veins.

There's a place in hell for you.



HARDCORE OPINIONS POLITICS

ADMIRAL JUDGE MAN LIFTING BANNER DOWNCAST FUEL

NO ANSWERS #9

BACK ISSUES: \$2 ppd, \$3 surface, \$4 air...

#8 Econochrist, Head First, Verbal Assault, Swiz, and hardC.ore...

#7 Fugazi, Infest, Uniform Choice, Slap Shot, Inside Out...

#6 Sold Out...

#5 Sold Out...

#4 Das Damen, NOFX, Big Stick, Down Syndrome, and photos...

#3 Sold Out...

#2 COC, Shades of Grey, State of Confusion, Potatoheads...

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Cover Photo: Victory Square statue—Leningrad monument to the heroic defenders of Leningrad, Great Patriotic War 1941-1945, Leningrad Blocade, photo Skindrud

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California, 1990, photo McClard

THE CREATORS: All photos by Sonia Skindrud, Florian Helmchen, and Kent McClard. Admiral nterview and Soviet article by Sonia Skindrud. Everything else by Kent McClard.

T-SHIRTS: No Answers t-shirts are available for \$6 ppd. They are two sided and the colors are varied. The artwork has a social and political attitude. L, XL, XXL...

RADIO: When in the Santa Barbara region listen to the Restless Intellect on KCSB 91.9 FM from 12-2 AM on Tuesday nights.

DISTRIBUTION: See/Hear, Blacklist, Toxic Shock, Trash American Style, Zed Records, Push Beyond, Ac/xtion Records, Full Circle, & Vinyl Ink. Stores get in touch because I prefer to deal direct.

HELP: If you know these people then please have them get in touch with me. They owe me money!! Bret Blue, Jason Bush, and David Font.

FINALLY: There are no advertisements in No Answers for very specific reasons. Hardcore has become far too commercial for my tastes, and I seriously question the role of advertisements in hardcore. I am not in business, and I question anyone who is... shouldn't we all?



inside out

Someone once said, "It is time to see who is who." That thought feels so important right now. It feels so real, and yet so foolish. I am at war with myself and I am at war with you. My war is called life. My struggle is both personal and external. The vehicle I have chosen is called hardcore. Laugh, god damn it, laugh. I should laugh at myself. Sometimes I do. Yet, I take myself seriously. That's half the battle. Hardcore is the way I describe my life. It is the way I conduct my existence. Am I the blunt of a cruel joke? Of course I am, but that does not stop my war.

I repeat, hardcore is not music alone. It must be about something else. This magazine must be more than a music journal. My life must mean something more than that. I refuse to be involved with nothing. I refuse to be nothing.

Revolution sounds so damn pretentious. It usually translates into revulsion. A twisted aberration that serves that which it seeks to destroy. Does hardcore seek to destroy the machine? Does it seek revolution, or does it ultimately seek to turn the gears of the machine?

The answer lies within us. Each one of us has one life to live. Only one life. That's it. That's all we get. Do we rebel or do we revel? Do we live within the confines that the machine has defined, or do we redefine those confines?

We need a revolution within ourselves. We need a revolution within our scene. We need a revolution. Do you understand? Do I understand? We need to radically altar the way we conduct our lives. We need to change the way we relate to each other. We need to rearrange our goals and desires. The machine must be destroyed. I mean it. It is no joke. It is no game. It is no lyric. It is no idle threat. It is a war. Wage war. Commit. Agitate. Educate. Speak. Act. Learn. Disobey. Rage against the machine.

There are cracks in the structure. A wedge can be driven deep within. From these cracks grow crevices, and holes, and gaps, and voids. Hardcore is my wedge. It can be a wedge, but it is usually a cog. The goal then is to find ways to transform hardcore into an alternative to the machine. The machine is society. In our society the machine is capitalism.

Capitalism dictates how we think, how we appear, how we interact; it dictates how we live. All things are reduced to a monetary value. Life itself becomes a commodity. The worth of an action lies solely in its value as a commodity. Capitalism envelops existence, transforms it, mutates it, mutilates it, and then packages it and sells it to us for a price. That price is our freedom, our dignity, our goodness, our being.

The struggle is not about the evil in humankind. It is not about racism, sexism, speciesism, war, murder, cruelty, injustice, or morality. The struggle is to free ourselves from the deception called capitalism. The problems that we face have developed over time. Capitalism is the culmination of that process. The things that we oppose have surfaced because of economic relations. Racism, sexism, speciesism, war, murder, cruelty, injustice, and morality are the products of economic division and subordination. They have developed in order to aid the economic position of one group in respect to another.

Capitalism is the fabrication. It institutionalizes inequality, selfishness, and greed. It offers ownership as a human right. Rich and poor become the natural order of things. Capitalism displays itself as the final result of economic history, as the perfection of human endeavor.

This is the false consciousness. As the division of labor created further abundance and efficiency, inequality in wealth and power began to surface. And with this inequality came the theory of human nature, and the artificial divisions of human kind. Without justifications, without a fabricated reality that could explain inequality then those who possessed nothing would soon take from those who possessed. Soon men were better than women, light skinned humans were better than dark,

strong men were better than weak men, intelligent men were better than ignorant men, and finally, rich men were better than poor. But why? The answer was natural, of course: humans are naturally unequal, humans are naturally competitive, humans are naturally greedy, humans are naturally evil, and thus humans are capitalists by nature. Sex, race, strength, and intelligence are simply nature's way of dividing the rulers from the ruled.

Do you believe that you are naturally evil?

I do not. That is a lie propagated to justify rule by power and greed. Capitalism has taught the world that alternatives are too idealistic. It spreads the myth of economic incentive, greed, competition, and evil. Humans are nothing, but reflections of the machine's reality. We can change. I can change. To argue otherwise is self defeating. I am not controlled by instinct. Capitalism is not instinctually human. Perhaps we have fallen so low that we will never shatter the false consciousness of capitalism. If so then life as we know it will be destroyed.

The bottom line is that capitalism holds the key to its own demise. That trait is intrinsic to its existence. Resources are not infinite. There are limits. Capitalism can continue only as long as resources hold steady. The system will collapse when there are no more resources to exploit. The death of the planet will be the death of the system; just as cancer eventually kills its host.

There is no glory in that end. It simply proves that human kind was an error, an aberration, a tumor, and a failure. I will not be a cancer cell. I refuse.

Instead, I choose to wage my war against the machine, and against myself.

Shatter the false consciousness.

I will not lift my fists; one disease cannot be cured by another. I will battle the machine by waging war against myself. I seek to defeat the imperfection and the ugliness that lies within me. My birthright is that I am contaminated by capitalism and the traits that it propagates. I am not exempt from its teachings.

As I have said, hardcore is my vehicle. Yes, laugh again if you wish, but I will only say it again. Hardcore is my vehicle. It represents an attempt to create an alternative way of life. I believe that hardcore is about expressing ones feelings outside of the confines of capitalism. The value of music, of expression, of opinions, of anger, of love, of art, of talent, of communication is not determined according to capitalist dictates. That is what hardcore means to me. Hardcore can easily become, and maybe it already has, a gear in the machinery of capitalism. If this is so then hardcore is not a revolution, but a revulsion.

We will become gears in the mechanism of revulsion when we are no longer concerned with building alternatives. When we no longer concern ourselves with the costs of our scene, when we no longer care about what we charge for our expression, when we place our petty egos above our conviction, when we concentrate on our music alone, then we become stale, shallow vestiges of potential revolution.

This does not have to be. We can control the door prices, the record prices, our messages, our actions, our egos, our commercialism, our sincerity, and our communication. It is not only possible, but it is our obligation. If it is not, then we become like small children playing at the game of being an adult in a diseased world.

I will not reap profit from hardcore. I will not sell my soul, I will not sell my expression, I will not sell my passion, I will not sell my way of life. I will not be a worker. To sell my fire would be the ultimate defeat. I would rather lose my ability to express. I am not a product. I am a living being. Hardcore is the expression of my being. It is not for sale.

It is indeed time to see who is who. — Kent

The biker poet. In many ways Mike Judge is the biker poet. He is hard, solid, capable of causing great pain, and yet he is quiet, fragile, and capable of crying. His soft side is what makes him strong. It's what makes him real. - Kent

to do that?

MIKE: Not really. After a while it was just what I really... it's how I actually felt. I didn't go out meaning to sit down and go "Okay we should make some anti-violence statement." It was just a total natural thing. I mean, since when I was fifteen, sixteen living in the town I live in I've been fighting constantly, almost everyday. I live in a real hick

JUDGE

KENT: It seems like you guys, at least lyrically, you changed a lot, on the 7" there seemed like there was a lot of... not necessarily glorification of violence, but a lot of violent overtones, whereas on the 12" there seems to be a lot more negative references to violence. How come there was such a drastic change?

MIKE: Well, on the 7"... I had recorded the 7" right after the Youth Of Today thing happened, and after the Youth Of Today thing I was pretty much...

KENT: What do you mean the Youth Of Today thing?

MIKE: Well, I was in Youth Of Today and when I first joined I was like "Yeah everything's great, and this is the greatest band, and I love these guys," but after the Break Down The Walls tour it just seemed like everybody and their mother was coming down on us for, you know, being positive, or talking about being straight, and it kind of hit me the wrong way when I found out how many people were against us for trying to do a good thing. So it kind of set me off in a bad way, and also it broke up the band at the end of that tour. So when I got back I was just like "All those guys want to come down on somebody for doing something, so I'll give 'em something to come down on." And so I started Judge. That's the whole thing, when I started Judge it was a total revenge type deal, but that was only a short period for like a month or two. Me and Porcell wrote the E.P., all the songs, lyrics, and recorded it within like a week and a half. So all those songs are a total reflection on what I was thinking in that one period of time. But obviously as time went by... I'm like 23 now, and a lot of stuff has happened since then. I see things in a different way. So obviously the lyrics had to change too.

KENT: Did you consciously decide to, I mean there are quite a few references to violence and trying not to do that, did you consciously try

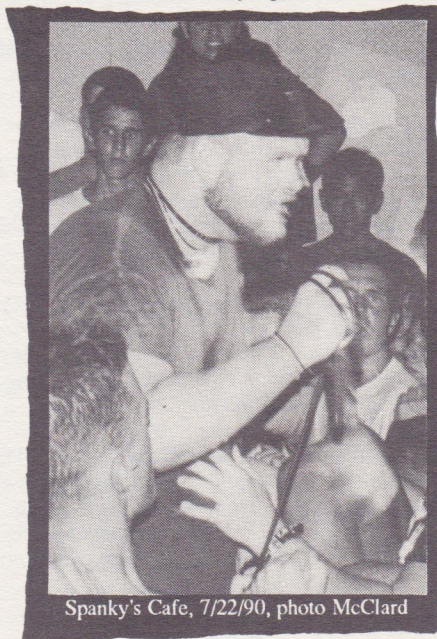
town. I've been fighting constantly since I was fifteen, and after a while it started to really sit badly with me that I was having to fight, and I really wanted to be a pacifist type. So all those things... When I write my lyrics I write just what's inside. I don't set out to write about a subject. That's why people go "How come you never wrote a vegetarian song?" It hasn't come to me. There's like a million things in my head. I can only write what flows at the moment. If the vegetarian thing hasn't come up with me then I'm not going to sit down and just try and write a vegetarian song just for the sake of writing one.

KENT: On that same kind of topic, "Take Me Away" is kind of a strange song. What exactly is that about, because it seems like it almost makes references to some kind of higher being, or a god, or something, if that makes sense?

MIKE: Yeah, that's... Well you're one of the first people that's hit it right in the head. It was weird when there was just all this stuff going on, I wrote that song when Ray and I were still kind of hanging out, but he was living at the temple and stuff, and I was just listening to all of these different people in my town about how they feel about religion, and kids in the scene, how they feel about religion, and I was just thinking how my feelings about religion were like kind of personal, kind of like something I couldn't preach about and try to get other kids to get into it. It was just something that I felt and I didn't think other people could feel. That's what "Take Me Away" is about. Just trying to keep myself clean, and out of the whole macho fight thing, just trying to be good, and I guess even asking for a little help to do it.

KENT: Since Krishna came up, what do you think about the whole Krishna thing?

MIKE: Well, I know for some people I've met it's good. A lot of my old friends are Krishna right now, and I see for some of them it has



Spanky's Cafe, 7/22/90, photo McClard



Spanky's Cafe, 7/22/90, photo McClard



Spanky's Cafe, 3/8/90, photo McClard

made them happy and stuff. I know for Cappo it's made him real happy, but I also see, especially from the tour, how kids on the East Coast who I've seen like a month ago are now wearing robes and sheared up and stuff, and so obviously you got to ask about what they're thinking. Are they really so into it that they took this step? And if they are, if they truly are then more power to them, but if they are just doing it because of a band wagon type thing then I think they are really screwing up big time. It is a religion and it shouldn't be taken lightly. Religion can't be a band wagon thing, at least I don't think it should be anyway.

KENT: It definitely seems like it is kind of sky rocketing.

MIKE: It definitely is. I don't think there is a scene that I have been to on this last tour that doesn't have like a fairly huge and growing Krishna movement thing going on.

KENT: On a different topic, originally Judge had the hard, tough reputation, and yet twice on the album you actually have lines about crying, "I can still remember the last time I cried," that doesn't seem to be in tune with the hard image. I was just curious, do you think that Judge has a hard image, or should have a hard image?

MIKE: Well, I think for one thing the Judge music will always be hard, and I don't know about the rest of the guys, but the way I look at it is that I've fought a lot before, and I've never felt good. I'll admit it, all the fighting I ever did, win or lose, I never felt good after it, and any guy who says, "I never cried," and this and that, there's no one who can feel good about beating up another person, or fucking someone up. It's just like no one can feel good from something like that. It's just like so, I don't know, with me, I don't know how to explain it... I knew everything I was doing was kind of wrong and the main thing was listening to the other bands that are coming around now who took a fucking hard edge stance, whatever the fuck hard edge is, those guys who took it, and I listen to them and they're nothing but fighting and fighting and fighting, and almost like making light of it. That's where the whole emotional thing came in for me because I kind of felt like I, actually people have told me that I was pretty much to blame for that whole crop of...

KENT: You mean kind of like Integrity, and that whole crop of bands? All those hard edge...

MIKE: That whole hard line thing. I don't know if you know those guys, but I know a few of them. Those are the kind of guys that... I read in the fanzines around their area how, when they do their interviews they say "Yeah, Judge lost its edge," this, that, and "They're not hard edge anymore, they're pussies now. We're the next heir to their claim." It's just like, but when we play with those guys they're like "Yeah, can you set us up with shows across country? Can we play with you guys?" And I say "Listen guys, this is the word. You've been talking shit." And they're like "No, no we wouldn't do that. Look I have the Judge hammers tattooed on me. I love you guys." And then you get out of their town and some kid comes up to you with a fanzine that's just full of them taking pot shots at us. It's just... The way I look at it to kind of ease myself is that if they did an interview and just talked about themselves and their ideas then they'd probably look

really stupid. So they do their interviews and they throw a few other band's names in who they supposedly want to kill and who should get hit, you know, to make their interviews more interesting. But you know any of those guys, I'm kind of like a fair guy and I'm not into the whole violence thing that those guys are into, but if they got something to say about Judge and if they want to come up and say it then I'll be more than willing to listen.

KENT: On the 7" you mentioned the misuse of sex, which is a strange thing because not very many straight edge bands talk about that, and you talked about being a slave to sex, and I was just curious what your position on sex and sexual habits would be?

MIKE: It's hard for me because I'm in a position where I've been seeing the same girl since I was pretty much a sophomore in high school, which was five, six, seven years now, and the thing that doesn't go with me was the whole schism in a few other bands I was in with the whole thing going on where I'm in a band, let's pick up the local girls, let's do this let's do that, and the whole thing around New York with the whole clubbing thing. You know, going out to clubs, you know, going out of your way to look for... It was also about a lot of people who came off so self-righteous and so perfect, but carried themselves like total sluts. Just like people belittling women who are in the scene, and just... To me they made it sound like the girl's purpose was to look good for the guys and wait around for them after the show, and I couldn't really see how anyone who is so pure and so straight minded could be a slave to an emotion like that. That's what the whole thing was against. And a lot of people, I think a lot of people I've come in contact with set the, you know picking up the other person after the show, I think they set that a little high on their standards when they came to what their feelings were about in the scene.

KENT: What would be your stance on like... There have been some bands that have been almost anti-sex. What's your position?

MIKE: I'm not anti-sex, but I'm anti, I guess you could call it casual sex. I'm not into the go pick up a girl, go home, sleep with her, and then that's it. It's corny, you're the first person that's asked me this question, but it's just like I think there has got to be love in there somewhere just to make things work because one without the other is kind of plain, at least to me anyway. But there are a million guys who will disagree and say this and that. With some guys it's just like a past time, but that's just... I don't know, I expect more from people I guess.

KENT: I've heard you're into Woodie Guthrie and some other kind of folk bands sort of, is that true?

MIKE: I like acoustic music mostly, but I really like old folkies, and I'm like a real Neil Young hit.

KENT: What other bands besides those are you into?

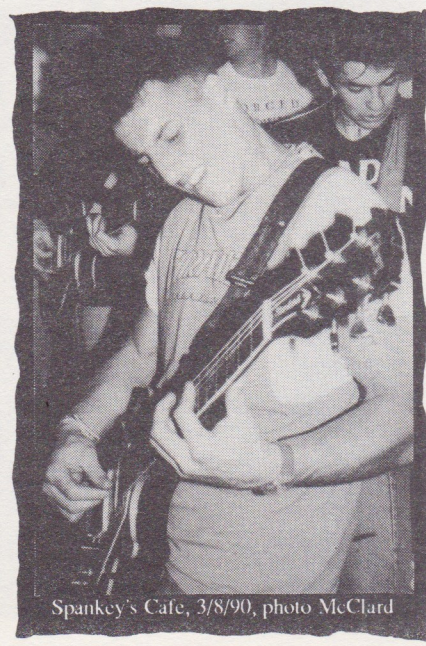
MIKE: I like guys like Woodie Guthrie, Ledbelly, old Bob Dylan, like old folk singers, plus I like Gordon Lightfoot, and my favorite, my God is like Neil Young. I can't go anywhere with out taking a Neil Young tape. But I don't know, a lot of people are totally tripped out about that. They're like "No way, you can't like that stuff," but the way I go about music is... I've been playing music for so long that anything that's good I'll listen to, and if it's good... I don't judge music



Spanky's Cafe, 7/22/90, photo McClard



Spanky's Cafe, 3/8/90, photo McClard



Spanky's Cafe, 3/8/90, photo McClard

by the label, I just judge music by good music. I like a little bit of everything mostly, except I just don't like rap. But I love folk music. To me that's right up there along with fucking hardcore.

KENT: I've heard also that you have a solo project where you play out acoustically and sing?

MIKE: Yeah, actually it's a thing where I go around with my guitar and play open mike nights at dance halls around town.

KENT: Have you done that a lot?

MIKE: Yeah I did a lot and a thing happened where I was... My old man owns a restaurant way up in the hills, and I went there and played, and there was a guy there that was drunk and he was getting pissed off

that I was doing like an old Black traditional song, and he was a real red neck racist type guy and he got pissed off and he threw a beer bottle, and I put down my guitar and we rumbled around for a few, and it just so happened that he grabbed my guitar and split it in half. I got another guitar, but I'm kind of... Right now I'm writing... A lot of stuff I do is like cover stuff, just like cover tunes. Right now I'm writing my own, but I love playing acoustic guitar. It's just something I love to do.

KENT: How do you feel about the limited release of that Chung King Can Suck It album, and just the inflated prices that it's going for?

MIKE: I'm against it. I was against it when they first brought it up, and I'm against it now. The thing was is that we recorded Chung King in a weekend. It was a day and night, day and night type of deal because Porcell was leaving for Europe with Youth Of Today. So we rush recorded it and it came out like shit. We were so exhausted that nobody could do anything right, not to mention that the guys that were doing it were total coked out jerks who just gave us the worst sound in the world. When they called me up and said what do you think of it, I said it fucking sucks, it's the worst. They said "Okay we'll redo it," and I thought that would be the end of it, but I guess sometimes just fucking money signs jump up in Jordan Cooper's eyes, and so he released it. Obviously the way the record traders go in the scene, something with like only a hundred and ten pressed is going to sky rocket in price. I got kids coming up to me going, "How can you let that record be sold for like \$250?" I just say, "Man, it has nothing to do with me. It's all Revelation." I don't even own one. I never had one. It isn't even worth it to be a collector's item to me. The reason we didn't let it out was because it sounded bad. So why put it out now?

KENT: A lot of people criticize Revelation that they've become a lot like bigger labels, that they're just like really money hungry, and just

that Jordan's kind of getting a little crazy. What do you think about the whole Revelation thing?

MIKE: Well, I don't know about trying to be a bigger label. I know when Jordan's trying to pull the right strings to keep his label afloat. The thing that bothers me about Revelation, I understand that Jordan is doing it by himself, but if he can't handle it then he shouldn't do it, because I go out and play shows and kids come up to me and go "Yeah, I ordered the Judge shirt like three months ago, and I ordered the Judge record eight months ago, what's going on?" And I have to answer for Jordan, and Jordan knows it. He never shows his face. I haven't seen Jordan since god knows when. So that's what bothers me when kids

send in their money and they wait like eight months for a record they can buy in a record store. It's just not right. I don't think Jordan will ever... I'm sure he's got deals with like bigger distributors, and he gets the record around, but his mail order thing sucks, and it kind of pisses me off that these kids are getting ripped like that.

KENT: When I talked to you before you mentioned that you weren't sure if you were going to do the next record on Revelation or not. Is that still the case?

MIKE: We're definitely not. I have no idea who we will do it with, but it definitely won't be Revelation. Jordan's an okay guy, but the whole thing is too big for one man.

KENT: It definitely seems like it

has gotten out of control.

MIKE: It really has. I remember when Ray and he first started it. No one knew it was going to be like this. They came around when New York had a lot of good bands that were getting ready to put shit out, and they were the label to be on. Everyone took notice.

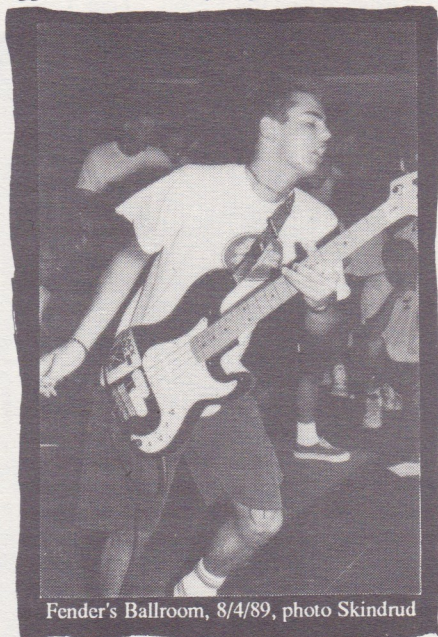
KENT: You said you are 23 now, so in 1982 you were what 15?

MIKE: Yeah, I was around that.

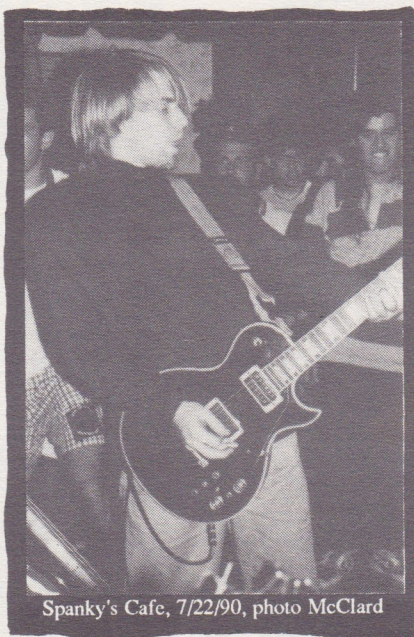
KENT: A lot of people criticize you and say you weren't really hanging around in New York in 1982, and hanging out at A7. What's the deal with all that?

MIKE: Well, I'll tell you, I guess it was in early '81 I started my first band. We just hung around this town, played the high schools, and shit like that. In '82 I started Death Before Dishonor. We did nothing but rehears and play at A7. Anyone from New York that was there will tell you that. I didn't think it was... I didn't write that song to come off like the guy that was around forever. I wrote that song as like a history type deal, a retrospect. The reason why these people fight so tooth and nail to say I wasn't there, it's kind of stupid. It's not that big of a deal.

Just like you I chose a path
And fought to make it work
Thought I found what I was looking for
Oh God I'm fucking lost
Like you, I face rejection
Like you, I look for acceptance
Like you, I don't always do right
Now I'm trying to find the things
I fought to hide when I was young
I've got to find the things I left behind
Now all I see is the damage I'm causing me
I've found things aren't black and white
I've lost things that were right in sight
I've had my share of discouragement
I tried to forget, I tried to forget
I'm just like you



Fender's Ballroom, 8/4/89, photo Skindrud



Spanky's Cafe, 7/22/90, photo McClard



Spanky's Cafe, 3/8/90, photo McClard

What can I say, I was there. I lived in that scene from 1982 on.

KENT: Earlier we talked about all the violence, do you look back at those times and think that they were good times?

MIKE: I think they were great times. I guess it is just because I'm kind of numb to it all, but I've been fighting since those early days constantly. It was like something natural. So when I look back I don't go "Look at all that shit we did." Back then it seemed like the fights were more... You seemed more in the right back then, and I think those days were great. All the New York bands were great. There wasn't much straight edge. There was pretty much only us, but everyone got along together. It wasn't like when D.B.D. played it was only straight edge kids and everyone else stayed outside. Now a days straight edge people go to the straight edge shows and no one else goes. It's just so split up. Back then everyone supported each other. It was just great. When there was a road trip everyone went. I don't know, those were just special times I guess. It's just hard to get those feelings back.

Especially when you play your home town club and you only get like the same audience you got last time. you know I love all the straight edge guys, but it just kind of bums me out when all these other people won't come because we're a straight edge band. I think everybody should be there together. I'm not into the whole separate type deal.

KENT: You guys are probably considered the major straight edge band in the U.S., what do you think about that?

MIKE: Well, honestly I kind of like it. We've tried hard, me and Porcell have been friends for a long time, since Youth Of Today, and I'm just happy that we could still be doing stuff together. I think Porcell's a great guy. I don't know, we were kind of like, in the latter Youth Of Today days it just seemed like me and Porcell's ideas on the whole thing were kind of the same, and why it never came to mind to start a band with him, I don't know. I'm just glad that things fell out this way.

KENT: Do you think sometimes though that you're limited, that you get stereotyped because of that?

MIKE: I don't think so at all. I write whatever I feel. Nothing else comes to mind. That's the only reason why I can write lyrics. Like songs like "Take Me Away" and especially "Just Like You." I write what comes to mind, and I don't hold back and I don't edit any of my songs. The way I write them is the way they get put out. As far as music, Porcell writes all the music now because the music has kind of surpassed my level of writing, but he writes the music and he just builds off of a riff that he comes up with. There's nothing like "We have to be like this band," or "We gotta write another 'New York Crew' and 'Take Me Away' and less of this." We don't do it like that. We write and we build off of what we come up with. So there's no way we can be held back. As far as we are concerned, Judge's music is in a class all its own. The way we write it you could be hearing anything, and even if some people are like "Oh, that sucks," to us it's still going to be Judge's music. We wouldn't write nothing that we didn't feel fit in.

KENT: My last question, and it's kind of a strange one, but I think it fits. In the one song it says you can still remember the last time you

cried, what makes Mike Judge cry?

MIKE: That is a weird one. Most of the things that get me are usually caused by me. A lot of the things I do. I still have so much in me that's just like non-rational it seems like. Just a snapping type feeling. If that happens, and I know I've totally lost control, for however long I just feel like I'm back at square one, and that really gets me big time because I want to make huge strides forward, and I just think getting caught up in something stupid like a fight or fucking going around back stabbing bands, just anything. That kind of shit really gets me. When guys who are supposedly my friends are just like, when we're not together, out to get a name for themselves by throwing mine in the mud. That kind of shit gets to me. When I see... Just about everything I kind of stress my points about get me in that way. It's just like, this is sounding corny, but I don't know. There are just so many things that strike me that way. Everything from like the way the town I lived in my whole life is slowly turning into a condo craze where only a fucking millionaire can live in, and how my old man has had this farm for god knows how long, since before I was born, and now like the way things are going we're kind of getting pushed out. That kind of shit gets me. I don't know, there's just pretty much... I find a lot of things to cry about just waking up every morning and just going through a normal day. You want to live a good life, but there's like so many things that are against you living a good life. You try and do your best, and if you're the kind of guy that can kind of try to do your best but settle for less then you'll be fine, but I guess most of the time I'm just a guy that knows what the best is and won't settle for anything else. And that kind of sucks. It makes it hard on my friends because when I see my... The same way when I see me do something wrong, or fall from something, and I get down on myself. it's the same way I treat my friends because I know what they're capable of. And if I see them achieve anything less then I'll be the first to tell them, and that makes it hard on everybody, but that's just the way things are.

KENT: Would you say that you are a sensitive person?

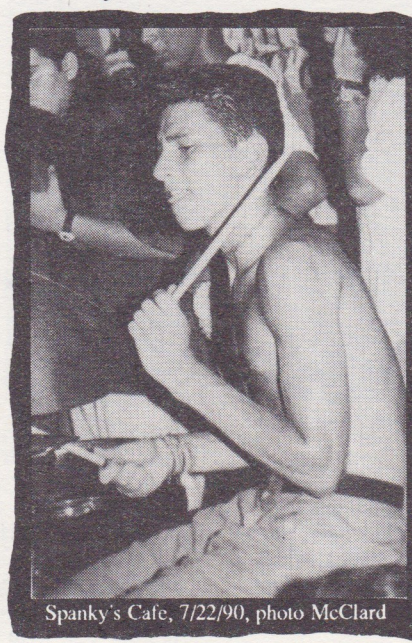
MIKE: I think I'm totally, totally, it's kind of like my downfall, man.

KENT: In what way?

MIKE: I don't know. It's just like I can... I don't know, I don't even know. Sometimes I just go "Damn, I wish I didn't care so much, god damn it." I just try... I couldn't even tell you dude. I'm sorry. Sometimes it's just... It's hard. It's not like consciously going out of your way to care about things. It's just like when it's inside you then you automatically care about something. You see something, and you go "Wow, man, that should have never happened. I feel like shit now. What's going on? What kind of shit is this that I'm dealing with?" And that sucks because then... there's so much bad that for someone like me to go around that it's like almost being constantly bummed out. A lot of times you just go, "Man, I can't even change any of this. All this shit is happening, no one is listening, and I can't do anything about all this shit. What the hell am I doing here." Then I got guys like Porcell going "I don't know dude, just fucking tough it out and someday it will all be worth it." I guess that's why me and Porcell have a band because he can keep me hanging in there.



Spankey's Cafe, 3/8/90, photo McClard



Spankey's Cafe, 7/22/90, photo McClard



Spankey's Cafe, 3/8/90, photo McClard

Note: Rather than have the same handful of 'zines reviewed in each issue, it has been decided that no 'zine will be reviewed consecutively in No Answers. If your 'zine already appeared then it has been purposely overlooked to provide room for other 'zines. Sorry, sort of. - Kent

UNDERGROUND PRESS #2

This is pretty good for issue #2, but it is in need of more opinion orientated articles. High points include interviews with Born Against and Tim of MRR. Keep an eye on this one. - Kent (\$1.50 to 798-3rd Ave.; Troy, NY 12182)

EXEDRA #1

Exedra is not a music orientated 'zine, instead opinions, photos, art, and poetry lie within. The content is all well put, with a good deal of it dealing with woman's "issues" (not too surprising since the editors are women), though in retrospect the majority of material focuses on other topics. Putting all bias aside (Sonin Skindrud is one of the editors), Exedra is quite interesting, which is to be expected. - Kent (Free, but a little postage never hurts, to 6660 Abrego Road Apt. 15; Isla Vista, CA 93117)

HIPPYCORE #7

As usual Hippycore is really, really packed with information; Christ On A Crutch, Screeching Weasel, Sins Of The Flesh, Conspiracy Of Equals, poetry, political articles, police stories, abortion, etc., etc... It's all pretty interesting and worth some time. A continually good effort. - Kent (\$1.50 to Po Box 195; Mesa, AZ 85211)

Reality Control; Jamey Billig editor of...

GOOD AND PLENTY #5

Loads and loads of photos; this seems to be the major feature, though there are exceedingly short interviews with Billingsgate, Say No More, and others. The layout quality could use a little more variety, while less photos and more reading might be in order. Still, this is fairly interesting. - Kent (\$1.25 to 2116 Salem Blvd.; Zion, IL 60099)

SHOOT GUNS #1

Haywire, Aversion, Voicebox, World Trust, and Head First are all included, in addition to reviews and various items. The interviews were decent, but I found a fictional piece called "What To Do" much more interesting. The big flaw here is that this is totally caught up in the schism of the Orange County scene; it's a black hole that leads nowhere. - Kent (\$2 to 1509 Sunrise Lane; Fullerton, CA 92633)

KNOW YOUR ENEMY #1

Reason To Believe, Youth Of Today, No Way Out, Wind Of Change, and others are all included in this young straight edge 'zine. Everything is fairly basic, but an article titled "Nailed To The X" shows some solid growth, and it hints of potential. - Kent (\$3 to 14 Winchester RD; Newton Hall; Durham; DH1 5QU; England)

ECHO LINE #1

This is really fantastic for a first issue or for a 10th issue. Interviews include Fugazi, Martin Sprouse, Crimpshrine, Sinead O'Conner, and The Gilman Street Project. The layout is clean and interesting, while the interviews and articles are well written and stimulating. Excellent, but kill the ads. - Kent (\$1.50 to PO Box 191561; San Francisco, CA; 94119-1561)

SIDEKICK #1

This is a first attempt that comes off simple but unpretentious. The layout is basic with occasional flashes of creative, and the opinion content is thin, though it is present. Interviews include Shudder To Think, Stump Wizards, and Jawbox. Growth is inevitable. - Kent (\$1.50 to 32 South 2nd St.; Wormleysburg, PA 17043)

DEADBEAT #2

This is well put together 'zine from England that features Fuel, Cringer, Visions Of Change, and Dissent. The interviews are good reading and the layout is pleasing. One of the better new 'zines. - Kent (\$2 to 3 Freeland Place; Bristol B28 4NP; England)

X-press

GROT #6

How is it that Jim Testa can do two magazines? And why does Grot's layout kick over Jersey Beat's? Anyway, this one features worthwhile interviews with Rise, Sludgeworth, and Rise Above, to only mention a few, and a few reviews... - Kent (\$1.50 to 151 First Ave. Box A; New York, NY 10003)

NEW START #1

Really basic, but it is a first issue. The interviews are marginal, though the questions aren't really bad, they just aren't geared for depth. Interviews include Ian MacKaye, Relapse, Sick Of It All, and Even Score. The Ian interview is very interesting, but that's Ian. Potential is there. - Kent (\$1.50 to PO Box 10110; Winston-Salem, NC 27108)

SUBURBAN VOICE #29

Al has been moving this into more of a college rock direction, thus this issue offers Soundgarden, Didjits, Fluid, and the Hard-Ons, along with Fugazi (Ian), Killing Time, and Sheer Terror. The interviews are good and there's a bit of opinion thrown in as well. Always a good read, plus this one comes with a 7" split with Sheer Terror and Crawlppappy. - Kent (\$3.50 to PO Box 1605; Lynn, MA 01903)

FREE THOUGHT #3

This 'zine has vastly improved. The full color photos are gone, and the photo quality, writing, and interviews are getting better. This one has Inside Out, Turning Point, Rebound, and Rest In Pieces. Hopefully this will continue to grow. - Kent (\$1.25 to 5219 Wyoming Rd.; Bethesda, Maryland 20816)

HANDS UP! #5

This has the oddest combination of bands... Judge, Camper Van Beethoven, and Edsel. In addition there are some reviews and poetry included. Kind of thin, but the content is good. - Kent (\$2 to 10104 Donegal Ct.; Potomac, MD 20854)

IT'S ALIVE #?

A great Henry Rollins interview, a color S.S.D. poster, and some reviews make up this very, very short issue. There has to be more!!! - Kent (\$2 to 900 Azalea ST; Oxnard, CA 93030)

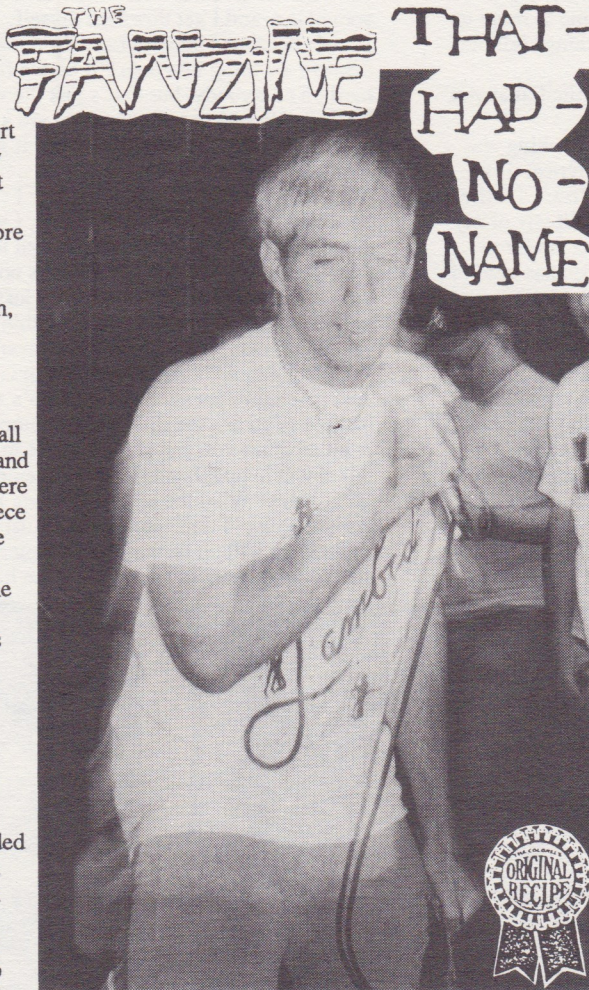
DEAR JESUS #36

Hardcore as hell! Life's Blood, Ian MacKaye, Nausea, No For An Answer, and others are contained within these pages along with an article about corporate violence and a heavy assault on In-Effect

Records... Heavy, aggressive, and interesting. - Kent (\$1.50 to PO Box 1145; Cooper Station; N.Y. City, NY 10276)

DISOBEY #5

This is a self-proclaimed anarchist 'zine that fits the stereotype to a tee; anti-straight edge, semi-sloppy cut and paste style, etc... The interviews include Hippycore, Nausea, Libido Boys, and No Fraud. Disobey isn't really bad, but there are a million 'zines just like it. - Kent (Postage? to 3739 Oak Glen Drive; Newbury Park, CA 91320)

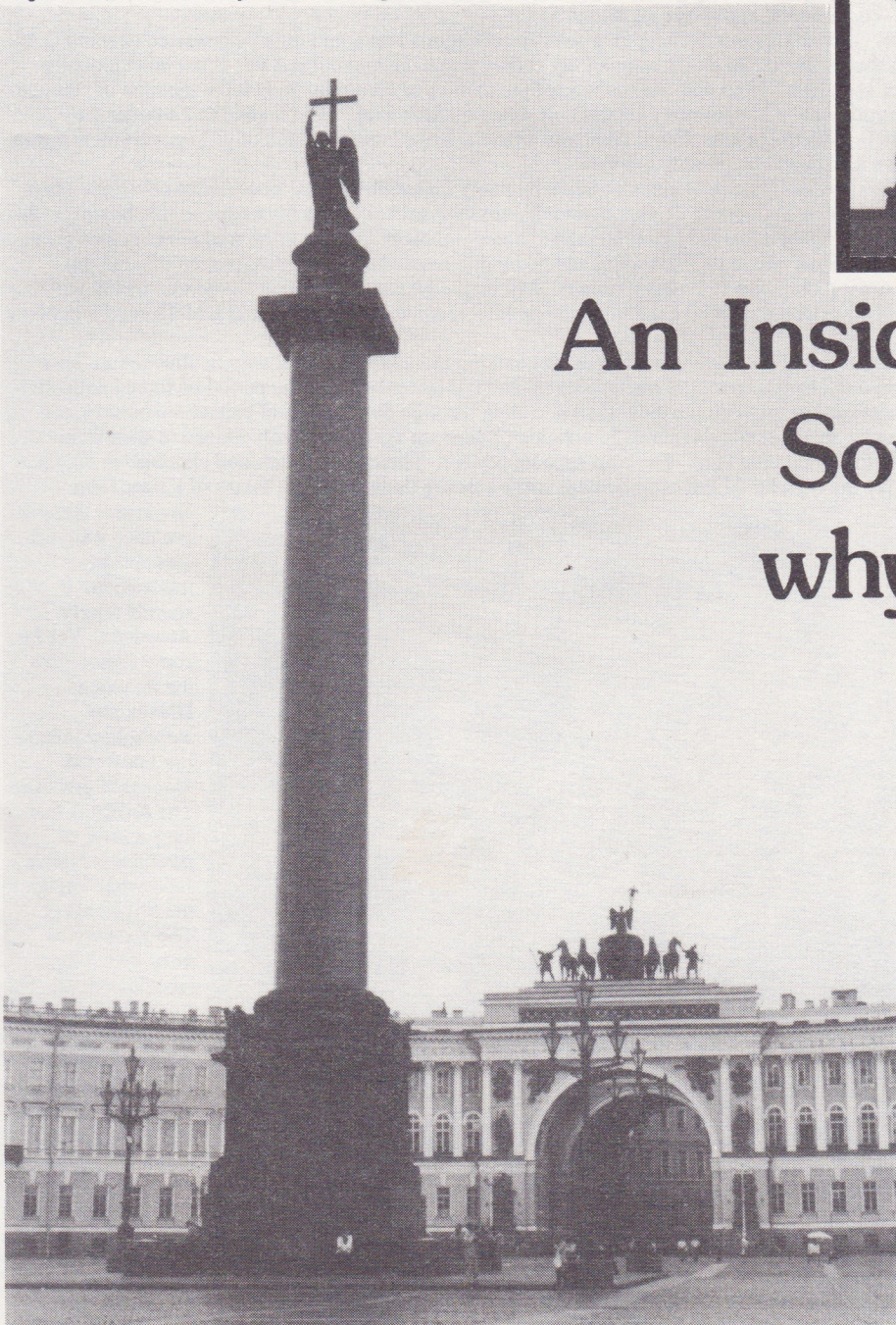


The Red Barn, 8/5/90, photo McClard

Get out. I mean it. Get the hell out of here. I've seen too many souls, too many minds wasted in the suffocating security of HOME. I'm not talking about your house. Your HOME is neither your friends nor your family, nor your community. And it's definitely not your country. Your HOME is your habit—the predictable environment you've been weened on as a child and which you continue to seek on that quest for a stitch of sanity and the comforts of a womb. HOME is also the festering ground of attitudes, stereotypes, prejudices, and flat out narciscism. For some, HOME is an end in itself: comfort, routine, and societal permission to get wrapped up in your own little world, largely ignoring the rest of the universe. You are small. You are very small. And if you cope with this revelation by turning inward then you are missing the point. Life is not about comfort. It is about agony, grief, deceit, beauty, and euphoria. It is about taking those seventy years of seemingly insignificant life, and, instead of making them even less significant, absolutely saturating them with the most broadening



An Inside Look At Soviet Haste: why socialism won't quit.



Palace Square, Leningrad, photo Skindrud

experiences fathomable. Be UNcomfortable, be lost, and be free—free from the chains that bind you. LEARN. Step outside yourself and take a look. Yeah, I grew up in Southern California. I ask you, "Where DOES L.A. end?" I've seen this Southland culture breed its consumerism, its youth worship, its self-indulgence. I've seen it then and I see it now in the eyes of every new generation. We have been taught. We have been suckered. This country, your country, our world. People are equal, but peoples are diverse. Step outside and gain. Through books or through being there. Your reality is only one reality. HOME is a fine place to visit but no one should live there.

At some point during my youth I developed a keen distaste for capitalism. Then, as now, I had it economically easy—middle class suburbia milking the rest of the world for every drop its worth. And with this gut wrenching pang of nausea came a flirtation with, if not an outright fetish for, the communist world (don't even bother mentioning "socialism" at this point since this virgin mind, merely wading in the shallow end of the great pool of alternative thinking, could not even conceive of some middle ground between "us" and "them"). So we're basically throwing out terms like "comrade" this, "red" that, and hanging with a few eccentric friends, one of whom got kicked out of his house for subscribing to *Albania Today* (Enver Hoxja R.I.P.) The intensity of feeling for my faraway friends in the Evil Empire came and went as their toil and sweat of the past worked to bring a more just and noble future. Rise the worn peasant. Rise the soot-veiled worker. Rise...?

The result of this extensive pondering was in short more pondering. Yet, this time, many years later, I found myself, sitting, thinking, on a wooden bench alongside a dozen or so hefty grandmothers handsomely kerchiefed at the chin, combat boots firmly footed in the earth. From August until September 1989, I lived in Leningrad, the Westernized cultural mecca of the Russian republic. The average tourist is whisked through this remarkable city of the Revolution by a big red Intourist bus, thrown in and out of the Hermitage, dined in some deceiving, grandiose tourist hotel, toted off to the Kirov theatre, and graced with a bit of "free time" to browse in the local tourist shop of Russian collectables and Western conveniences conspicuously priced at the older, less favorable exchange rate. Needless to say, Soviet citizens are not allowed inside any of the above tourist venues. Many in fact do not even know what is sold inside these privileged shops. But, the strict nature of these tours is no longer dictated by Moscow's paranoia of foreign curiosity gone awry; instead, it indicates the desires of the average American tourist traveling abroad: namely comfort, convenience, conciseness, and above all status.

The time I spent in Leningrad and other Soviet cities did almost nothing to answer the questions I had, and only perpetuated new ones. It was everything and nothing I had expected. Yes, it did shatter the myths and dreams of my earlier years. However (and this is the most globally uplifting point), it shed new light on the possibilities for socialism. 1989 was not the year of the demise of communism b/w the triumph of "democracy" (translation: capitalism—these terms are neither synonymous nor remotely related). It was a realistic look at the human spirit under the constraints we have created for ourselves. Let's be brutal. Two truths have found their way onto the lips of the most unlikely: 1) government means power elite; 2) money makes the world go round. There's no denying it's ugly out there.

The metamorphosis currently taking place in the Soviet Union was made possible by many different factors. Economics obviously plays an outrageously large role. In short, their survival rests on the strengthening of their economy, not their military. On the negative side however, the modern Soviet is being bombarded by so many contradictory images and is forced to make choices—choices that she or he was never before given. As *glasnost* and *perestroika* continue to promise the Soviet citizen more psychological and economic freedom, Western traits seep through the borders often aggravating existing social problems or creating obstacles to positive change. My single greatest fear is that the Soviet Union will become a cheesy Las Vegas sideshow with expensive, class-oriented orchestra seating, a lot of liquor, some raunchy sex, and a McDonald's in every mall. Marx is churning in the earth.

You see, the irony of the current economic reform is that the masses are simply not rushing to embrace it. For sake of illustration, let's consider the once lauded leaseholder agricultural reform—an effort to put right the wrongs of the past (most notably, the period of forced collectivization under Stalin), to reassert the importance of the relationship between the individual and land through the practice of private ownership, and to, you guessed it, increase production. The premise is simple: an eager and ambitious leaseholder, under an agreement with collective state farm management, decides to independently farm a section of the communal land. The plan appears perfect. There's a critical food shortage so why not increase worker incentive by allowing the farmer to enjoy the benefits of self-employment while earning three times the salary of a state farm

employee, thereby ensuring a significant rise in production. It sounds utterly... American. Yet for some reason, like the American Dream, the leaseholder reform has not found success in practice. The reality is that such a level of personal initiative is somewhat foreign to the Soviet mind. The leaseholder must face long, laborious days, financial risk, and no vacations. I can't tell you how many times I went to eat lunch at a restaurant that was on lunch break. By in large, working in the Soviet Union is like an eight hour coffee break with a couple stints at the register. These people do not get commission.



October Revolution Day Parade, Leningrad, photo Skindrud



Seldom will anyone get fired for an attitude problem. One night we were excited to get a written reservation at one of Leningrad's best restaurants, only to discover that we were the only party in the whole place. Apparently the waiters were willing to accommodate us, as Americans with hard currency. The point here is that the work load placed on you by economic freedom is a disincentive in itself. To make matters worse, the terms of the agreement with the state farm do nothing to bolster the confidence of the leaseholder. Nearly half of the private farmer's profit returns to the hands of collective farm management. The leaseholder faces further realities such as shortages of equipment and high priced necessities like feed. But perhaps the worst obstacle confronting the private owner is public jealousy and resentment. This is also the case of the cooperative businesses, especially clothing stores and cafes. Prices for privately manufactured goods are considerably higher than for those produced by the state, but the quality of the former is almost always superior. Certain people can afford the better things and others cannot, and all of a sudden what do you have but class divisions. The average Soviet is hearing one thing from the government, another from her or his peers, and a lot of emptiness from the family shelves. The question of agricultural reform asks: Is bigger better? Is the leaseholder reform just a

return to serfdom? And if so, since the Soviet Union skipped one of Marx's historic stages on the way to socialism—good ole capitalism—perhaps it is necessary to take it from where they left off with the sorry Nicholas II. At any rate, they're in a mess.

After meeting many Russians, the most surprising thing I discovered was that the people are generally not behind Gorbachev. Believe it or not, the older generation longs for the security of the Brezhnev years (at least there was food), while the youth seem to refer to him as "the greatest bullshitter." Most are stunned by the West's naivete. Are we gullable to fall for this man's PR campaign? The fact of the matter is that day to day life has gotten more difficult under Gorbachev. Sure, *glasnost* has offered the Soviet new freedoms of speech, thought, demonstration, even religion. But with time *glasnost* has been taken for granted. Remember what a bit of freedom did to the East Germans in 1953, the Hungarians in 1956, the Czechs in 1968? To the Soviet mind, *perestroika*, Gorbachev's program for restructuring the communist economy along free market lines, is NOT working. But then when your stomach's upset your mind gets a little muddy. Lines ARE bad—something like Christmas time at the mall. Even I stood in line for two hours to remember what a Chiquita banana tasted like. Highly valued goods are rationed: soap, detergent, tea, and sugar. Not to mention the scarcity of electrical appliances: radios, TVs, cars. People use *Pravda* as toilet paper. Those I met seemed to be less concerned with politics and more concerned with the empty shelves. To them, the ruble is only paper. The average Soviet has a good amount of rubles. But there is simply nothing to spend them on. Funny how the average American has unlimited choices but very limited cash. Mass Soviet public is like a bunch of disgruntled punks sitting around complaining about the state of their personal lives and the incompetence of their government but alternately finding more solace in the bottom of a bottle than in actually organizing an alternative.

So what you've got now is all these people voting for Boris Yeltsin, falling for his empty promises. He has mastered the rhetoric of a true western politician. He cries, "We will give you what you want—quality goods in bountiful quantity. Is next week okay?" What are these people thinking? You can't have your cake and eat it too. Worse yet they want someone else to bake it for them. Boris Yeltsin is nothing more than an overzealous celebrity, motivated more by personal ambition than social good. And to top it off he is a celebrity with a very strong bent toward nationalism. He's talking about the laws of the Russian republic overriding the command from Moscow. Such a goal is attractive to newly emerging organizations like the very frightening anti-semitic *Pamiat'*. And people are worried about a united Germany? The inter-ethnic tension and racial bigotry is so thick in the USSR that you can actually give thanks for living in the "tolerant" U.S.

Economically speaking, the U.S. is very much idolized. These people have been deprived of "things" all their lives. Sure they were socialized to despise Western ostentatious frivolity, but they are not stupid. The Soviets are not as isolated as you think. I met kids who knew more about Western popular music than I would ever want to. They know what's out there and they want a piece of the pie. The young traders wouldn't

take anything less than brand new faded Levi's and Wrigley's brand gum. Incidentally, I went to the Soviet Union ready to explain to my new found friends the inefficiencies of the American system, to warn them of impending doom, inequality, injustice, if they followed only our example. But these kids didn't want to listen. I had one friend stare boldly into my face and say, "You're problems don't even compare to ours!" How could I argue? I'm a white, middle class, suburban, American kid. My life has been so easy. Needless to say I began to see things very differently, from a Soviet perspective. I too had to stand in



Marketplace, Leningrad, photo Skindrud

lines, retrieve rationed goods, use *Pravda*. But I had one thing they wanted very bad—the American dollar. The Black Market is comprised of (as far as I could tell) about 70% of the youth. Each is of course involved to a varying degree. But my point is this: you've got most of the young men panting for your buck, selling their soul on Nevsky Prospect, building intense hatreds for all advantaged foreigners, and hooking up with some real thugs called racketeers. These elitist mafia mongers control the youth—the young men as traders, the young women as prostitutes. The latter situation is not uncommon. Our male American friends were approached frequently by young, attractive, "good" but desperate women. They probably do not fulfill your stereotype of an American prostitute (be it right or wrong). They are your sisters, your mothers, even your girlfriends. Monogamy, in general, is not all that common. This is in part a result of the sexist male dominated social system that still pervades the socialist structure. Sure women hold many traditionally male dominated positions, but they also wear skirts, cook the meals, and get continually told by their sons to "shut up." Socialism does little to eradicate cultural traditions and social ills in the home. Let's just say, I got called a "chick" and even a "redneck" (non-local) on several occasions. In short though, the Black Market offers a chance for the Soviet to either save up foreign currency to emigrate (legally or illegally) or to trade it in to a racketeer for a higher ruble exchange. The average Soviet makes about 200 rubles a month. A state run apartment costs under ten rubles a month. But a friend of mine was considering paying a couple thousand rubles to bribe his way out of obligatory military service. Well I've heard many horror stories about the Soviet military. Most of the time, guys will do just about anything to get out of it: bribery, insanity, surgery. You can get away with anything in the Soviet Union as long as you have connections and money. Sound familiar? These people are miniature Donald Trumps—real opportunists. The bottom line is: with Western influence and the disintegration of state order have come increases in violent crime, car accidents, and demonstrations. True the latter would indicate an increase in political participation but keep in mind it's in the form of miners' strikes and tobacco riots. I did enjoy the weekly political debates outside Kazanskii Cathedral, now known as the Museum of Religion and Atheism. But witnessing a peaceful demonstration in Moscow and later hearing of its escalation into a violent confrontation with police did not increase my hopes for true democratic progress. Things are pretty much the same all over.

Contrary to Gorbachev's prohibitionist stance, vodka is pretty easy to come by. Just ask any evening cabbie. Alcohol consumption is, however, rather high. But the life of the average Soviet is rather stifling. For the factory employee, work is less of a challenge and more of an extended lunch break. Artistically speaking, past levels of censorship combined with the dogmatic socialization included in every education provide little incentive or outlet for breaking new ground. On the plus side of the particular brand of communism that took hold in the Soviet Union, the Soviet citizen has a plethora of interest clubs and organizations to which she or he can belong. For FREE. The U.S. has little to offer along these lines. Alcohol is a problem because it offers the Soviet (as it does all of humanity) an escape from the repetitive, unsatisfying nature of post-industrial life. Why if they had only listened to Marx on the alienation of the worker. Or better yet, to William Morris—

British socialist extraordinaire.

Keep in mind that the Soviets have succeeded where many Westerners have failed. Both children and the elderly are highly valued and integrated into the community. Just because they do not comprise a valuable source of labor (as the capitalist most certainly would contend) does not mean they are without ability and merit. By in large, the Soviet citizen does not go to sleep hungry, homeless, sick, or ignored. Sure there are exceptions. But these extraordinary cases are not comparable to the ever increasing number of "forgotten" Americans. I fear, however, that these values may be lost in the shuffle toward Western ways.

There is of course more to the Soviet people than the Black Market. Indeed, there is an altogether different sector of society—a group we affectionately termed as the "real" Russians (obviously referring to those white Slavs living in the Russian republic). Some



All statue photos were taken at Victory Square—Leningrad monument to the heroic defenders of Leningrad, Great Patriotic War 1941-1945, Leningrad Blockade, photos Skindrud





Still, there is no question about it. The most amazing phenomenon about the Soviet Union (next to its size) is its cultural diversity. The Soviet Union is not Russia. It is comprised of more than 100 different nationalities grouped into fifteen republics. Soviets are of many different creeds: Orthodox, Catholic, Jewish, Muslim, Atheist. Estonians are, at a glance, communist Scandinavians. Georgians appear as communist Turks. Uzbeks—communist Persians. When you pass into the next republic, you are basically entering a new nation. During my stay I was once an hour from Finland, and later an hour from Afghanistan. Soviet socialism never managed to break ethnic boundaries. The Soviet peoples are highly segregated. Even the government seems to perpetuate this. The result is territorial disputes, religious disputes, racial disputes. The government tried to alleviate the anguish in Armenia and Azerbaijan by sending refugees to safety in Tadzhikistan and providing them with apartments. But let us not forget that Tadzhiks have been waiting for something like ten years for those spaces and they're not about to give them up without a fight. The only thing that could unite the peoples of these various republics is their desire for independence from Russia. All in all, there is little tolerance for diversity. In fact the only blacks a Russian encounters are those students of African communist states that are forced by their government to receive educational training in Leningrad or Moscow. As you may imagine, these Africans aren't so happy to be studying on the frigid gulf of Finland in the first place and so they don't always appear to be the most gracious guests. And the Russians are likewise not the most hospitable hosts.

The Soviet Union is a conglomerate of "independent" nations. Not only is Gorbachev having a hard time getting his comrades to commit to the long haul of modifying the five-year plan, but he is having a hell of a time getting these people to commit to anything in a unified manner. After all, the military still sends contingents of young, white, Russian soldiers down to Muslim areas in cases of unrest. In military terms, the enemy must always be thought of as less than human, expendable. And how about this multi-party system? An Armenian party. An Azerbaijani party. A Russian party. How will these forces come together? Bulgaria it seems has begun to look back. Poland is still suffering. And the Soviet Union is falling apart at the seams. Does this mean that socialism/communism has failed? NO. These countries never reached communism. They were driven by elite power structures, centrally controlled by bureaucratic *apparatchiks* who benefited greatly from their lofty heights. Look what happened to Ceausescu. Look what Stalin did. Even Lenin modified enough to get his New Economic Policy going.

Order is most definitely on the agenda. At this point in time, the Soviet government holds neither cohesion nor legitimacy. New institutions must be created, legitimized, and supported. A great deal is riding on the strength and dedication of the newer, more democratic local government leaders. Many of my new Russian friends believed there would be another revolution soon. People are so fed up. And everytime there has been a loosening in communist cohesion, there has been a desire for more freedom and a revolt. But with plenty comes poverty. The capitalist game is played according to a zero-sum gain. If one person wins, another loses. The more you have, the less is available for another. Don't fool yourself. Socialism is not dead. It has been invigorated. The Soviet Union jumped the gun. Perhaps we will now together go through the appropriate stages of development according to Marx, but hopefully on an inevitable transition away from material progress toward humane progress. The social welfare state model is alive and well in Scandinavia. True communism has yet to find its niche. One day it could be embraced. I only hope our planet will survive long enough to see it.

Пролетарии всех стран,
соединяйтесь!

—Sonia

seemed so naive when compared with their Westernized counterparts. Others were simply ever faithful adherents to the old communist line. Still some were genuine, beautiful people, enthusiastic to share any part of themselves and their culture: the blockades and famine brought by World War II ("the Great Patriotic War"), the victory of communism over fascism, Tsarist grandeur and wealth, the living works and familiar graves of masters such as Dostoyevsky and Vladimir Vysotskii, the beginnings of Russian Orthodoxy, caviar, cucumbers, and mushroom picking at the *dacha*. It is true, however, that the modern day Slavophile and Westernizer have a deep-seated aversion to one another. One will tell you to lose the other. Their values clash like the intentions of Gorbachev and Yeltsin. The whole country is torn in two. And why not? They are launching into the unknown. If some person moved into your place tomorrow and demanded it absolutely vital that you transform your living arrangement into a cooperative housing joint based on socialist economics, what the hell would you do? As an American you are prized by both sectors of Soviet society—as an idol and a novelty. But each inevitably wants you as their exclusive friend. It is not a comfortable arrangement. Most of the time I was ruminating about the reality that these people like me for my passport stats.



Lenin, Leningrad State University, photo Skindrud

IGNITION - The Orafying Mistle Of... 12"
If inspiration runs thin, then listen to these words and water shall turn to blood. The lyrical content on these six songs are pure in their integrity and emotion, and the musical content is a subtle, but riveting flow of combustible energy. Ignition will be missed, but they will never be removed from memory. - Kent (\$5 to Dischord; 3819 Beecher St. NW; Washington, DC 20007)

SAMIAM - I Am 7"
Samiam plays upbeat, energetic and fun music that is a little too hard to fall into the pop punk category. If catchy music with somewhat irrelevant lyrical content is your trip then by all means check this one out. - Kent (\$3 to Lookout Records; Po Box 1000; Laytonville, CA 95454)

SHELTER - Perfection Of Desire 12"
No, this does not sound like Fugazi, and, yes, Ray Cappo is the singer. The music is a combination of straight hardcore ala Youth of Today, and more experimental endeavors. The lyrics are all pretty damn important and credible, though "Shelter" is a thinly disguised plea for spiritual surrender. The Krishna perspective is intense, and difficult to swallow. The only thing perfected here is packaging and marketing; perfection of "maya." - Kent (Revelation)

VISUAL DISCRIMINATION - In Vain 12"
Why do bands like this exist? The music is generic muscle metal meets Agnostic Front, and the lyrics are a collection of absurd statements. Furthermore, why does this band have so many anti-alcohol songs when they themselves drink? - Kent (Nemesis)

BROTHERHOOD - Words Run... As Thick As Blood 12"
Finally, Brotherhood's amazingly great demo reaches vinyl!! All eleven songs explode with incredible energy, and the lyrics are solid in their social/personal/edge themes. The S.D. influence is most dominate, but Brotherhood managed to keep their own character. One of the best straight edge records to ever come out. - Kent (\$9 to Crucial Response; Kaisersfeld 98; 4200 Oberhausen 1; West Germany)

SAWHORSE - 7"
Formerly known as the Skinflutes, this Northern Californian band has changed it's name, style, and approach for a drastic improvement. The lyrics have heavy political messages that are done intelligently and truthfully, and the sound has a D.C. approach, at times reminiscent of Embrace. A real quality release. - Kent (\$3 to Lookout Records; PO Box 1000; Laytonville, CA 95454)

NEUROSIS - The Word As Law LP
Rasping, rasping metal trimmed dirge punk with anti-capitalist and dark lyrics is the Neurosis experience. It is a good experience. "To What End?" and "Common Inconsistencies" are excellent excursions into the capitalist world, but "The Choice" may be a better representation of the real Neurosis attitude considering that they played an L.A. show for \$17 (\$17.50 in advance). Sacrifice yourself, indeed. - Kent (\$6 to Lookout Records; PO Box 1000; Laytonville, CA 95454)

REASON TO BELIEVE - When Reason... 12"
Fabulous. Reason To Believe plays fabulous music. The approach is a melodic assault that never forgoes power, and the tempo variety is vast, while the singing is multi-layered and tasteful. The slow moody tunes and the break neck numbers are fired out with equal feeling and intensity. The lyrics are in the personal vein, with most being intelligible. Honestly, this is fabulous. - Kent (Nemesis)

INSIGHT - Standing Strong 7"
This Salt Lake City band plays extremely powerful and chorus orientated hardcore with a tinge of metal and an East Coast influence. The lyrics are in the posi-youth mold without being too positive or too standard. "Etc" is a nice animal rights song. Heavy. Recommended. - Kent (\$3 to Soul Force Records; PO Box 10094; Scottsdale, AZ 85271)

QUICKSAND - 7"
Force Inside Out and Jane's Addiction onto a round 7" piece of wax and call it Quicksand. Personal lyrics that flow in and out of consciousness combined with the fore mentioned hodge podge of musical sound can be damn good, and the emotional feel can be moving, but it can just as easily appeal to the mainstream and leave you feeling cold and empty inside. - Kent (Revelation)

FUEL - 7"
The D.C. influence is extreme, and accusations of Fugazi rip-off may well be warranted, but still Fuel puts out some catchy and inspiring songs. "Take Effect" will lodge itself in your mind, while "Incomplete" and "Fuel Hymn" will hold your attention. A superb release, but again the D.C. feel can be a bit eerie. - Kent (\$3 to Lookout Records; PO Box 1000; Laytonville, CA 95454)

PLEASANT VALLEY CHILDREN - What The World... 7"
Stenchcore? Grindcore? Noisecore? Music? My next door neighbor just told me to turn it down. He said it was driving him crazy. The feeling was mutual. The lyric booklet is much more interesting. - Kent (\$5 to Words Of Warning; Karl, 50 Ronald Road; Newport, Gwent; NP9 7GF, Wales, U.K.)

LOST - Cut Out The Heart 12"
Lost's melodic mid tempo hardcore is reminiscent of a slightly raw American Standard (the D.C. comparison could also apply, I suppose), and it comes off with a good amount of soft power and emotion. The lyrics are also in that vein, and there is an interesting acoustic number present, as well. - Kent (\$6 to Lost; 777 Nagle Rd.; Erie, PA 16511)

The Red Barn, 3/3/90, photo McClard





The Core, 7/28/90, photo Skindrud

V/A - Achtung Chicago 12"

Fourteen bands from the Chicago area contribute one song each. Gear, Billingsgate, Lunar Psychotics, and Screaching Weasel make side B great, while Side A isn't quite as memorable. This is a good sampling of the area, and a diverse one at that. Each band also gets a half page in the song booklet. Independent. (\$6 to Underdog Records; PO Box 14182; Chicago, IL 60614)

JAWBREAKER - Busy 7"

This three piece puts out some great music that relies on plenty of melody and honest expression, while never falling into the pop punk mold. "Busy" appears on the Unfun LP, while "Equalized" does not. - Kent (Shredder)

JAWBREAKER - Unfun 12"

Melodic music combined with roughly sung lyrics that take both a personal and a serious direction is what can be found on this subtle yet powerful 12" release. The final effect is a melancholic feel that might be compared to a D.C. sound, though that denies the highly original and unique approach that Jawbreaker has mastered. Pure greatness. - Kent (Shredder)

AGAIN - Trainwreck 7"

Again has undergone some dramatic changes since their last vinyl outing. They have developed into a great melodic hardcore band with some pop influences, and they definitely have that D.C. feel. The sound is good and the lyrics are also good, though occasionally a bit too personal maybe. Worth looking into. - Kent (\$3 to Donut Crew; 627 S. Oswego CT; Aurora, CO 80012)

URGE - Listen Carefully To The Powerful Urge... 12"

Oddly enough this is Urge's first 12" and it's a live one. The sound quality is good, and the music is hard, powerful, and energetic, but a studio 12" would have been a bit better. Still, the lyrics are first rate with their description of our post-modern world of decay and dreariness. Raw. - Kent (Spirit Family; Lilienstr 16; 3000 Hannover 1; West Germany)

GO! - And The Time Is Now... 7"

This is one New York hardcore band that doesn't sound like they are about to turn into Slayer and sign to a major "street level" label. The approach is more like early frantic New York thrash before mosh was invented. The lyrics are a collection of humor and significant points. "Holy Roller" is the best number in its totally justified attack on H.R. of the Bad Brains. A comparison to the Neos (but slower music) is unavoidable. - Kent (\$3 to Noo Yawk Rehkids; 175 5th Ave.; Suite 2589; New York, NY 10010)

MILITANT MOTHERS - Different Souls 12"

Their last album was a twisted fusion of Blast, Beefeater, and the Bad Brains. This second release is no different, except for that there are more members and maybe the Brains influence is a little too heavy on some songs. Still, this is a good effort musically, and lyrically the songs are packed with words that are respectable. - Kent (Spirit Family; Lilienstr 16; 3000 Hannover 1; West Germany)

REFLEX FROM PAIN - flexi 7"

Believe it or not the ten songs on this flexi were recorded on a 2-track in a basement in 1983 by a collection of people who would eventually record the Shelter LP. Yes, with the absence of Tom Capone this is the same band in a different time. The sound is total fucking buzz and smash hardcore that never lets up, and Ray's voice is even rawer than in Youth Of Today. There ain't nothing like '83 thrash. - Kent (TPOS Productions; 12 Mill Plain Road; Danbury, CT 06811)

POISON IDEA - Record Collectors Are Pretentious... 12" Finally a repress of Poison Idea's insane debut 12"! Total fucking manic hardcore with plenty of groove and talent. The repress even features four additional tracks that have appeared on other various records. Thunder. - Kent (Bitzcore; Reperbahn 63; 2000 Hamburg 36; West Germany)

V/A - Murders 7"

Absolution, Life's Blood, Nausea, and Born Against all team up with one song each to make Murders an essential consumption. Every track is a prime example of New York noisecore at its best, and the lyrics and insert statements are respectable and for real. Forget the corporate New York labels go with the raw. - Kent (\$3 to Verniform Records; PO Box 1145; Cooper Station; New York, NY 10276)

AGAINST THE WALL - Identify Me 7"

This 7" has been in the works for years, but believe it or not, it's been worth the wait. Power is the descriptive word. The style is heavy hardcore with an effective metal flare. Lyrically, the topics are interesting. "Identify Me" is especially well received. Comparable to Judge or the Cro-Mags, but much better. A must hear! - Kent (Nemesis)

DARK ANGEL - Live

Scars CD

Power speed metal... Need more really be said? This live performance lasts for over 42 minutes, while there are only eight songs, and there are no lyrics, but plenty of "intelligent" moments of pre-song banter. It's good for what it is. - Kent (Combat Records)

BAR HOMET - 7"

While this sounds a lot like grind core or stench metal, Bar Homet is 100% death metal complete with deep devil voice, chug-a-chug guitar, and cryptic lyrics. If they're from Hell then Hell must be laughable. - Kent (\$3 to N.F.O. Records; 9254 Highland Rd.; Pittsburg, PA 15237)



Anisq' Oyo Park, 3/25/90, photo McClard

SHUDDER TO THINK - Ten-Spot 12"

This is art. Shudder's music is listenable, but it isn't necessarily enjoyable. The sound isn't mellow or noisy, but twisted with mellow and noisy bits, and the vocals are even more bizarre with their contorted vocal skill. Following suit, the lyrics are more like abstract poetry. Yeah, this is art, but art often exists outside the realm of good and bad. - Kent (\$6 to Dischord; 3819 Beecher St. NW; Washington, DC 20007)

SUB SOCIETY - Iceman 7"

Even though the lyrics are pretty sappy, as in their love gone bad theme, Sub Society plays some damn catchy pop punk with memorable guitar and singing. This would be pretty disposable if it weren't for the last song—"A Lot Less." It's really well done, and even the bad love topic is believable. - Kent (\$3.50 to JFS Productions; 4456 MT Henry Ave.; San Diego, CA 92117)

MONSULA - Nickel E.P. 7"

This four song 7" features a melodic pop punk sound and personal lyrics that aren't the typical pop sap. Side A has a much better sound, due to a new line-up, while the songs with the old line-up on the B side are better live. In general, Monsula offers a melancholy record that is pretty memorable. - Kent (\$3 to Lookout Records; PO Box 1000; Laytonville, CA 95454)

Anisq' Oyo Park, 3/25/90, photo McClard



CARRY NATION - Face The Nation 7"

It's doubtful if this makes them "legendary," but Carry Nation existed before NFAA and they have reformed as a super-group featuring four well known scenesters. The songs are decent musically with a good hard edge, though a bit repetitive internally, and the lyrics are a little blasé considering Dan O'Mahony's capabilities. Could have been better considering the abilities of all concerned. - Kent (Workshed)

PROFAX - 7"

There are quite a few good bands coming out of Europe right now, and Profax is definitely one of them. The sound is a combination of faster and heavier New York style hardcore and slower more melodic influences. The vocals have a cool sounding European accent, which adds a distinct feel, and the lyrics are well done. Quite good. - Kent (\$5 to Mario Schranz; Seldwyla; CH-6362 Stansstad; Switzerland)

AMENITY - This Is Our Struggle 7"

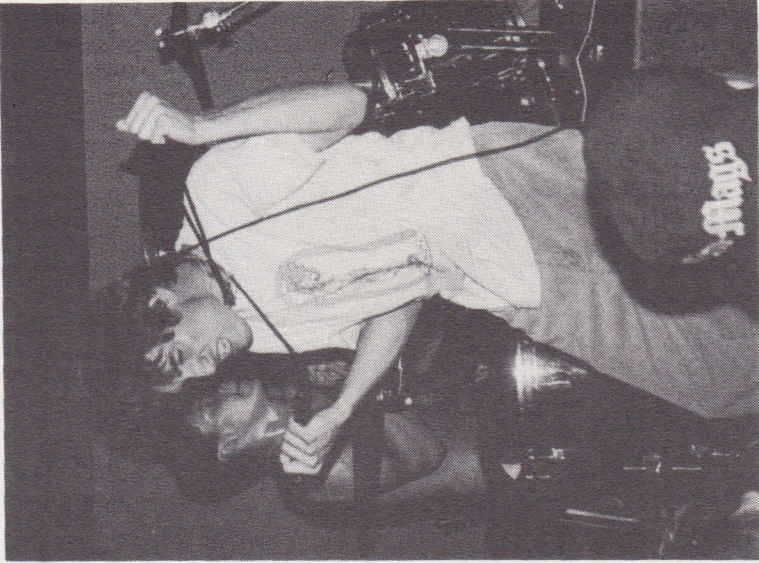
Amenity's second 7" (the first one was marginal) clearly establishes them as one of Southern California's best bands. The music utilizes a distinct style that is constructed with a solid foundation, strong vocals, and fantastic guitar playing. Lyrically, the title track takes an anti-racism stance, while the other two songs take an effective assault on social conditioning from a personal perspective. Excellent, by all means. - Kent (\$3 to Vinyl Communications; PO Box 8623; Chula Vista, CA 92012)

DEAD STEELMILL - It's All Over 7"

Yeah, this is punk alright. Seven songs of simple thrash with titles like "Shit Samwich" and "Get Naked" definitely qualifies Dead Steelmill as punk. Punk packaging, too. Remember, punk does not imply that it's good. - Kent (\$3 to Underdog Records; PO Box 14182; Chicago, IL 60614)

SOUL REACTION - 12"

Look, the lyrics are good in their criticisms of crack and racism, but fuck this music belongs on MTV or in the pages of Rolling Stone. Soul metal?? Damn trendy right now and damn profitable too. Living Color, Heads-Up, Bad Brains, Soul Reaction... give it a rest. - Kent (\$6 to Takeover Records; PO Box 40116; St. Paul, MN 55104)



Spankey's Cafe, 7/22/90, photo McClard

SONS OF ISHMAEL - Sing Generic Crap 7"

Combining one, two thrash with hooks, breaks, and diversions galore, Sons Of Ishmael hark back to an older day with their sharp sarcasm and direct approach.

The style is good, and the lyrical message is excellent, while retaining a sense of humor. Good and fun. - Kent (\$3 to 1979 Yonge St. #5; Toronto, Ontario; MAS 1Z6; Canada)

INTEGRITY - In Contrast of Sin 7"

Sometimes music is irrelevant when the lyrics and philosophies are so fucked up. This is one of those cases. "In Contrast of Sin" has a religious direction with references to Krishna,

"Harder They Fall" is an ode to fighting, "Bringing It Back" makes no sense, and the other two tracks are animal rights songs, which is even more confusing. Integrity are the epitome of ignorance. Avoid. - Kent (A ridiculous \$4 to Victory Records; PO Box 197; Clarendon Hills, IL 60514)

LEFT INSANE - 7"

What flag are four instrumentals? Sure there is a definite Black Flag influence and they're good musicians and all, but fuck instrumentals are hollow and boring. Musically indulgent. - Kent (No Reality Records)

RESISTORS - Tiny Scars 12"

The photos, the artwork, and the general design is a complete carbon copy of Danzig, Samhain, and ultimately the Misfits. However, the music has no real similarities, well maybe occasionally. The sound is a hardcore version of an earlier rough punk rock approach combined with the slow heavy, and basically it is pretty good. Lyrically, the first song is a cool anti-fascist number, while the others are pretty much just silly in their "dark" content. Not terrible. - Kent (Geil Publishing; Suite 1173; 730 N. LaSalle Street; Chicago, IL 60610)

8-BARK - Twelve 7"

First of all, praise goes out for hand screened covers. Secondly, 8-Bark puts out some semi-melodic hardcore punk that incorporates some rock influences and some early punk sounds. Third, the lyrics are good, though not incredible. Lastly, the singing is enjoyable, and all considered this is a good independent release worthy of attention. - Kent (\$3 to Underdog Records; PO Box 14182; Chicago, IL 60614)

JUDGE - Bringin' It Down 12"

This is New York straight edge as it stands today. The sound is controlled, tight, power orientated, and somewhat metallic. The lyrics aren't ground breaking, but they are very solid. There seems to be a reflective almost regretful outlook toward the past, which seems honest. This is a great record, not fantastic, but absolutely great. - Kent (Revelation)

V/A - No Control At The Country Club 7"

Live from the Capitalist Country Club comes Carry Nation, Visual Discrimination, Insted, and Bad Religion. All of the songs are pretty good, but the sound quality is piss poor. Hardcore is in a sad state if this was the "last great West Coast hardcore show of the '80s." - Kent (Nemesis)

V/A - A Pittsburgh Compilation... 7"

There are four bands and four songs featured here with Necraccia doing a decent hardcore song with a little metal bit, Barbed Wire Dolls do a punk tune (female band), Tragedy do metal tinged hardcore, and the Hard-On Gang do a song. Just okay, at best. - Kent (\$3 to N.F.O. Records; 9254 Highland Rd.; Pittsburgh, PA 15237)

FACE VALUE - Coming of Age 7"

Though not too unique either lyrically or musically, Face Value manages to construct a mighty powerful set of songs. Occasionally the guitarist goes off into a metal void, which is pretty annoying, but for the most part all six songs are enjoyable, if not very original. - Kent (A ridiculous \$4 to Conversion Records; 26861 Trabuco Road; Suite E-143; Mission Viejo, CA 92691)

7INCH BOOTS - Tamped Concrete E.P. 7"

Hold on tight. 7inch Boots may seem like a joke, but their music is brutal, brutal, and brutal. The metal influence is extreme, but the power and raw surge keeps it in the hardcore realm. The lyrics are just as good in there commentary about the scene, the male world, deforestation, and the government we put in power. - Kent (\$4 to Snoop Records; Am Geierberg 17; 3153 Lahstedt 1; West Germany)

CHARLEY'S WAR - 7"

Charley's War looks and sounds more like they are from New York's Lower East Side than from West Germany. Their sound utilizes varied tempos, mosh breaks, drum builds, loud choruses, and masculine vocals: real New York hardcore. Excellent layout. - Kent (\$4 to Crucial Response; Kaisersfeld 98; 4200 Oberhausen 1; West Germany)

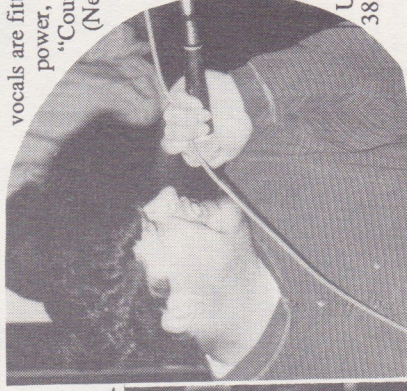
TRENCH FEVER - 7"

Disco? No, semi-thrash punk rock with a catchy but raw feel. The lyrics are decent, though side B is much better in that respect. "Goik" deals with journalism lies, and "Price To Pay" is a discussion of life's inevitable hardship. Pretty good. - Kent (\$3 to Sick'n'tired; 43 Warner Rd; Hornsey; London, N8 7HB; England)

V/A - The Iceemen Cometh... 7"

Pushed Aside, Hard Stance, No For An Answer, and Slapshot all contribute one song each to this high quality sounding live record. The Slapshot song is the only previous released song, which is especially nice for those who enjoyed the other three bands. - Kent (Nemesis)

MINDWAR



Spanky's Cafe; 7/22/90, photos McClard

FAR CRY - Story of Life 7"

Playing a modern sounding style with slower mosh speeds coupled with quicker sections and clearly articulated singing (with respect to angry vocals), D.C.'s Far Cry puts together a respectable 7" record. The lyrics are in a personal/edge vein, and there is just enough variety and innovation within the songs to set them apart. - Kent (\$4 to Crucial Response; Kaisersfeld 98; 4200 Oberhausen 1; West Germany)

FISHWIFE - 7"

Twisted, contorted, and uniquely strange... Fishwife's music is fairly experimental with a lot of different sounds (drawing from both old rock and newer alternative rock/punk) and the vocals are fitting. At all times they retain a noisy kind of power, or intensity, and the lyrics are good, with "Counter Culture" being sadly true. - Kent (Nemesis)

HOLY ROLLERS - As Is 12"

The Holy Rollers have a fairly unique sound. It is a combination of punk rock, hardcore, '60s and '70s hippy rock, a flash of country, and the D.C. legacy. It is unique, and very varied. The ideas presented are just as varied; alienation, endless work, racism, greed, and raw emotion are all covered. Uniquely Excellent. - Kent (\$6 to Dischord; 3819 Beecher St. NW; Washington, DC 20007)

V/A - Earth Rapers and Hell Raisers double 7"

This is a benefit for Earth First. It features a forty-four page booklet that is filled with band info, Earth First info, and plenty of opinion orientated pages. The twelve bands that are involved include Seein' Red, Christ On A Crutch, Reality Control, and Jesters Of Chaos, to name a few. Musically, there is something for everyone. Very much worth it. - Kent (\$5 to Hippycore; PO Box 195; Mesa, AZ 85211)

V/A - Wedge 7"

The total D.C. experience... though on the lighter than usual side. Edsel put out an uninspired dud, Geek offers a folk orientated essay on our rape culture that is carried through on emotion alone, Hated do a rockin' cover of "I Am A Rock," and Lungfish bring the mood way down with a totally impassioned country influenced number. A must for the D.C. collector. - Kent (\$3 to Simple Machines; 3510 North Eighth Street; Arlington, VA 22201)

YOUTH OF TODAY - 7"

The Krishna influence is evident in Ray's lyrics, but the end result is very effective and credible. All three songs address social topics in a progressive way, with "Modern Love Story" being the most critical in its look at how men and women interact sexually. The approach is not anti-sex, but a critique of how we abuse each other in its name. Musically, it's solid Youth of Today, though Ray's vocals have a pubescent Shelter feel. - Kent (Revelation)

LEFT INSANE/HAYWIRE - Suburban Voice 7"

Issue #28 of Suburban Voice featured this split 7". Left Insane do two instrumentals, which offer technically advanced music with lots of guitar trickery, but overall they lack interest. Haywire, on the other hand, lay down two of their best tracks ever. So if Haywire is your thing then check this out, though it may well be sold out. - Kent (\$3 to Suburban Voice; PO Box 1605; Lynn, MA 01903)

HAYWIRE - Painless Steel 7"

These four songs have really captured Haywire's ugly burning metal-hardcore sound at its best. The power is there, the sound quality is great, and the general atmosphere of the Haywire experience (not necessarily good) is present. Undoubtedly the best Haywire release to date. - Kent (Nemesis)



Somewhere in Europe, 20th Century, photos by Florian

ONCLE SLAM - First Attack 12"

Out of France comes New York hardcore complete with gruff angry vocals and metal influence. The style is well done, powerful, and hard. The lyrics are also good, and a few of the songs like "It Never Ends" are quite good. - Kent (Jungle Hop; 106 Re De La Jarry; 94307 Vincennes; Cedex; France)

HELICOPTER - 7"

Post punk from San Diego that is very mellow and slow and boring... This just doesn't do anything for me. - Kent (\$3 to Down Side; 2015 Garnet Ave. #5766; San Diego, CA 92109)

COX-ORANGE - Hypnotized 7"

This West German thrash band is pretty damn good. The music is buzz saw hardcore with modern sounding groove or mosh breaks, and the singing is raw but controlled. The lyrics are interesting, especially "Is This Justice?" which seems to be written from the perspective of a killer serving a life term. Respectable. - Kent (Anok Records; Droste-Hulshoff-Strasse 42; 4709 Bergkamen; West Germany)

SLIPKNOT - 7"

Revelation attempts to break down the straight edge stereotype with this release. The sound is a complete theft of early Accused material, complete with Blaine's distinctive growls, political lyrics, and death imagery. Still, the power is definitely there and the lyrics are good. - Kent (Revelation)

SAY NO MORE - Hardcore 7"

The raw buzzing guitar combined with the coarse singing gives Say No More an early hardcore sound, even though the music is obviously influenced by the present. The lyrics are decent with the themes being familiar. Good solid hardcore with sharp, but jagged teeth. - Kent (\$3 to Say No More; 3604 S. 121st.; Omaha, NE 68144)

WAT TYLER - Contemporary Farming Issues 7"

This is definitely independent and punk; the printing, recording, and pressing costs are included. The music on side 1 is very similar to say a rough Toy Dolls, while side 2 features industrial metal and acoustic pop. The songs are well done and catchy, while the lyrics are somewhat irrelevant in their joke nature. "We Pledge Our Allegiance To Satan" is, however, crucial lyrically. - Kent (The Bottom Flat; 3A Alexandra Drive; Gipsy Hill; London; SE19 1AJ; England)

KEEP IN MIND - Down Stairs 7"

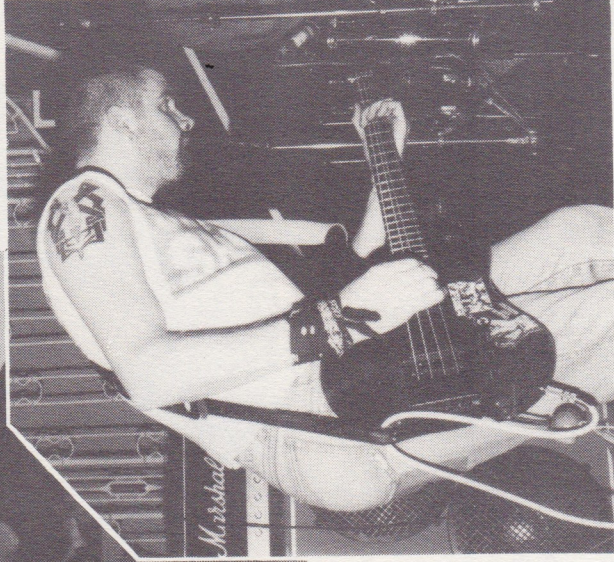
There is a definite D.C. feel to this record, but not in such a direct way that it can be described. The music is slower, the vocals are up front, the guitar continuously hums along beneath the surface, and the lyrics are personal but pertinent. It comes off kind of dreamy, which in this case is good because it fits the lyrics well. Good packaging, too. - Kent (\$3 to Donut Crew; 627 S. Oswego CT; Aurora, CO 80012)

ONCE AND FOR ALL - Thinking Man's World 7"

Believe it or not, Once And For All's trip is a combination of rap vocals/rhythm and hardcore music. Funny thing is it works. The lyrics are pro-thinking, anti-racism, and positive. There is even a James Brown cover. Surprisingly energetic, fun, and credible. - Kent (Nemesis)

FUGAZI - Repeater 12"

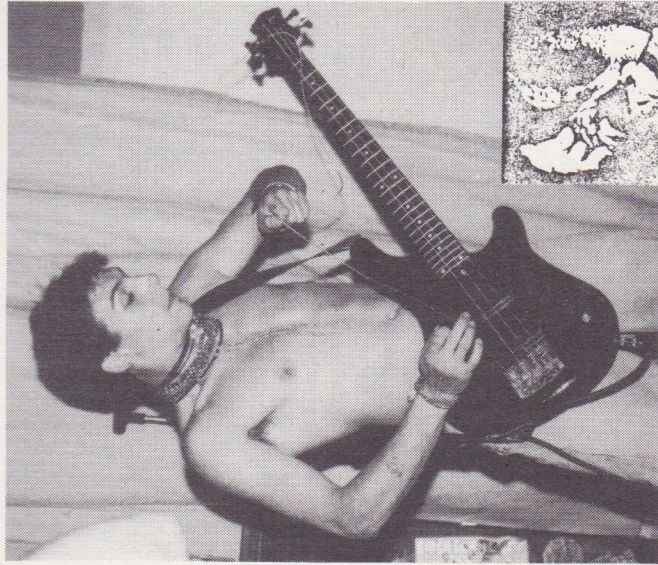
Finally, Fugazi has finally put out an album that has the power and feeling of their live experience. "Greed," "Shut The Door," "Merchandise," "Repeater," "Steve-Fisted Find," and... every fucking song is worth mentioning. All the talk isn't just hype, Fugazi really are incredible. - Kent (\$6 to Dischord; 3819 Beecher St. NW; Washington, DC 20007)



BIONIC - 12"

This three song 12" is composed of fairly difficult music and marginally good lyrics at best. Musically, it's a messy gathering of parts that are thrown together to form songs. They're too long and too complicated. I'll pass. - Kent (Spirit Family; Lilienstr 16; 3000 Hannover 1; West Germany)

SEPARATE PEACE



Oxnard (Hell), 6/21/90, photo McClard

RELAPSE - 7"

Give me a break. This is the most generic heavy moshcore stuff I've heard in a while. The lyrics are really terrible in their lack of substance and depth. Musically they sound like a weak version of Release. Bad, I mean really bad. - Kent (A ridiculous \$4 to Progression Records; 317 Woodbridge; Grand Blanc, MI 48439)

OLIVELAWN - 7"

Three songs here, one is a shitty slow '70s sounding tune, one is a harder '70s rock number that has some power, and one is a Damned influenced song that packs some pop. When progression and regression merge... - Kent (Nemesis)

LIBIDO BOYS - Childhood Memories 7"

Two live tracks and one studio number make up this totally rockin' hard ass hardcore record. The title track is a well written piece concerning child abuse, and the two live tracks are well recorded, and enjoyable. Don't miss this one! - Kent (\$3 to Red Decibel; 2451 Nicollet Avenue South; Minneapolis, Minnesota 56001)

MALIGNUS YOUTH - 7"

Totally independent and alternative punk rock, that much is for sure. The songs are fast and noisy, while the vocals are squeaky and just as fast, and very annoying. It's a little hard to digest. The lyrics, on the other hand, are good and worth some time. Nighmarish. - Kent (\$3 to Youth Ink. Records; 125 Carol Hayden DR; Sierra Vista, AZ 85635)

FIDELITY JONES - Venus On Lovely/Destructor 7"

Fidelity Jones picked up where Beefeater left off with the punk rock, jazz, and funk twisted contortion. The sound is a lot mellower, and Tomas' vocals are more dominate, while Andy's guitar work is undecipherable. The lyrics are socially directed, with "Venus on Lovely" blasting away at the burn of junk, and "Destructor" simply asking for less hate and more communion. - Kent (\$3 to Dischord; 3819 Beecher ST NW; Washington, D.C. 20007)

CORRUPTED MORALS - Cheese-It 12"

Is this 1990 in Northern California, or 1983 in Southern California's Hardcore?? Every one of these songs could have been on a Mystic comp along with Ill Repute, R.K.L., Habeas Corpus, and Rat Pack. The lyrics are surprisingly good and damn impressive. Too bad this singer left the band. - Kent (\$6 to Lookout Records; PO Box 1000; Laytonville, CA 95454)

GRINNING KIDS - Meine Hand 7"

Two of the three songs are in German, and the other isn't much lyrically, but there are explanations of the songs along with the lyrics, which is cool even if they're in German. Musically, the Grinning Kids play guitar based thrash with the occasional metal squall, and screaming vocals. Decent. - Kent (Amok Records; Droste-Hulshoff-Strasse 42; 4709 Bergkamen; West Germany)

WALK PROUD - R.I.P. 12"

Walk Proud's hardcore is frantic, urgent, explosive, and demanding. The guitar roars and buzzes

along with constant bite and power, while the vocals are up front and chorus orientated, and the song structures are varied with tempo changes, intros, builds, and breaks. Lyrically, the messages are tried and true posi hardcore (not straight edge) staples that are worth attention. - Kent (Nemesis)

JAWBOX - 7"

The D.C. influence is there, but Jawbox takes a slightly harder or possibly more traditional approach than what might be associated with the current D.C. "sound." The tunes vary in force, but all four have a definite level of power, and the lyrics, while not being too blatant, are good. Solid in quality, and recommended. - Kent (\$3 to PO Box 60335; Washington, DC 20039)

FORBIDDEN - Twisted Into Form 12"

Terribly boring and predictable metal like this does indeed prove that Satan exists. His existence is the only explanation for why I am continually bombarded by this kind of garbage. - Kent (Combat)

HUNGER FARM - 7"

While not too impressed by the lack of a lyric sheet or by what I can understand, I found Hunger Farm's catchy, semi-speedy, rhythmic, and thick punk to be enjoyable. Decent. - Kent (Nemesis)

The Core, 7/28/90, photo Skindrud



BIONIC - 12"

This three song 12" is composed of fairly difficult music and marginally good lyrics at best. Musically, it's a messy gathering of parts that are thrown together to form songs. They're too long and too complicated. I'll pass. - Kent (Spirit Family; Liliensir 16; 3000 Hannover 1; West Germany)

THE TROUBLE WITH LARRY - Otto Messmer 7"

The two songs here are both post punk (the kind of stuff you read about in *Sound Choice*), and while they aren't very enjoyable (personal taste, not quality), they are interesting. The title track does, however, have some energy and it is at times reminiscent of more direct punk. Worth a chance considering the price. - Kent (\$1.75 to Good Kitty; 201-A N. Davis Ave.; Richmond, VA 23220)

GLEE CLUB - Looking 7"

This was one really great record. The music is slower, melodic punk rock with spurts of speed, and the singing is just that—singing. The lyrics are all good, and the straight edge songs were particularly good. If this is still available then do get it! - Kent (Glee Club; 26 Hayes Road; East Greenbush, NY 12061)

NUKEY PIKES - Three Men And The Monkey 7"

Japanese hardcore is notorious for having really, really bad lyrics, and this is no exception. "Milk & Sugercorn" is perhaps the epitome of nothing. Musically, their sound is well written rockin' hardcore that can bust out into super speed metal type stuff. Definitely not inspiring. - Kent (\$5 to Heart First Records; Boeckstrasse 39; 1000 Berlin 61; West Germany)

BOLD - 7"

They started out so pure and young, they moved through the years of criticism and ridicule, and now they have finally laid it to rest with the cynicism and realism of an older world. It is a story of life, and with that in mind these four songs are great, though the sound is simply rock with metal diversions. Appropriately, it is the final phase, and just maybe, the most real. - Kent (Revelation)

V/A - Seeing With New Eyes 7"

Four bands from Long Island, New York come together with one song each. In *Your Face* do a really, really great punk rock tune with plenty of catchy bite, Krakdown suck, Bustin' Out give a decent showing, and Just Nice come off fairly well. Where are the lyrics? - Kent (\$3 to Scooby Doo; 2 Westminster Lane; West Lsliip, NY 11795)

GREEN DAY - 39/smooth 12"

Total and utter pop punk complete with sappy lyrics about girls is what Green Day does best. It's decent, but it easily becomes background noise if one doesn't actively pay attention. It's a wonder why they didn't sign to I.R.S. Records. - Kent (\$6 to Lookout Records; PO Box 1000; Laytonville, CA 95454)

PITCHFORK - Saturn House 7"

Pitchfork was one of those bands who could be incredibly hot or incredibly cold. Their one and only 7" isn't really on either end of the spectrum. The music is fairly well influenced by the D.C. style, but it certainly isn't too direct, and the lyrics are personal. If you enjoyed Pitchfork in the past then definitely pick this up. - Kent (Nemesis)

SWINGIN' TEENS - Transfixation 12"

The Teens play decent music, I suppose, but the style is rock and roll with no bite and no drive, and the lyrics aren't worth reading. The whole thing stinks of wanna be commercial rock that is stuck in the college circuit.

D.C. Space, 10/12/89, photo McClard

- Kent
(Geil Publishing; Suite 1173; 730 N. LaSalle Street; Chicago, IL 60610)

BIG BOYS - Wreck Collection 12"

The Big Boys were one of the most innovative and original punk bands of the decade. Their blend of punk, thrash, and funk kicked ass. This collection of rare tracks proves how amazing they were. - Kent (Unseen Hand)

OFFENDERS - We Must Rebel 12"

The Offenders were one of the most powerful, intense, and radical bands to surface in the early to mid '80s. Their sound, while being slower than thrash, was fast, hard and aggressive, and their lyrics were defiant in their political and social ideology. This reissue is proof of all that, and it includes five bonus tracks. - Kent (Bitzcore; Reeperbahn 63; 2000 Hamburg 36; West Germany)

OFFENDERS - Fight Back 7"

Another great reissue from Bitzcore!! This one features five hard to get tracks by the Offenders. "Rockin' The Town" and "One Fine Morning" are really old punk numbers with a Clash influences, and the other three tunes are leaning more towards the Offender's later powercore sound. - Kent (Bitzcore; Reeperbahn 63; 2000 Hamburg 36; West Germany)

ONCE AND FOR ALL - Thinking Man's World 7"

Believe it or not, Once And For All's trip is a combination of rap vocals/rhythm and hardcore music. Funny thing is it works. The lyrics are pro-thinking, anti-racism, and positive. There is even a James Brown cover. Surprisingly energetic, fun, and credible. - Kent (Nemesis)

TREADMILL - Planet Of Playthings 12"

NO!!!! I grew up hating classic rock, and I refuse to be swayed by a record containing a cover of Pink Floyd's "Mother." A few songs do have good insightful lyrics, but oh shit, Pink Floyd... Please, don't make me go back... - Kent (Acid Test Records; 3232 San Mateo NE; Suite 198; Albuquerque, NM 87110)

V/A - The World's In Shreds #4 7"

All of these comps are interesting and worth a listen. This one features Sticks and Stones, P.E.D., A Priori, Undead, Separate Peace, and Parasites, all of which play some degree of pop punk. A lyric sheet would have been nice, though vocals are easily understood on all tracks. A dive into the mellow side. - Kent (Shredder)

THE JUNGLE MEDICS - 7"

Self proclaimed "psychedelic partycore in a weird mixture of thrash 'n hardcore and exotic slam-beat funk," but there isn't any thrash, hardcore, or slam-beat on this 7". Instead, it's an inch away from commercial pop/funk. Dumb. - Kent (Jungle Medics; M Fonhus GT. 28; 8800 Sandnessjoen; Norway)

JAWBOX



CITIZENS ARREST - A Light In The Darkness 7"

Out of N.Y. comes the East Coast equivalent to Infest. This is total fucking fast thrash that never lets up, well except for the occasional catchy slower heavy mover. Lyrically, the messages are good, but the almost metal like death imagery has got to go. Intense. - Kent (\$3 to Wardance; 35-18 93st; Jek. Hgts., NY 11372)

ROAD WHORE - 7"

Road Whore's claim to fame is Al Bum of the now defunct White Flag. He does the vocal chores. The music is straight rock with a jagged edge and a bit of rap, and it is pretty memorable for what it is. The lyrics are moron city, which was to be expected. Nothing ground breaking. - Kent (A ridiculous \$4 to Allen Wrench; 5225 Canyon Crest Dr.; Suite 73, Floor 69; Riverside, Ca 92507)

The Red Barn, 8/5/90, photo McClard



SUCKERPUNCH

THE COUP DE GRACE - 7"

Two very, very metal tunes are featured here. The music is not hardcore at all but pure speedmetal, or crossover stuff not unlike Metallica. Metal city. It's pretty powerful, though boring. No lyric sheet, which is a bust. - Kent (\$3 to Red Decibel; 2541 Nicollet Avenue South; Minneapolis, Minnesota 55404)

ADMIRAL - 7"

Excellent! Excellent! Admiral has a hard edged D.C. sound and feel that comes off exceptionally well on all three songs, while the lyrical content takes a personal route that fits well with the musical form. In terms of influences, Soul Side and Ignition come to mind, but in an indirect way. Truly great. - Kent (\$3 to Soul Force; PO Box 10094; Scotts, AZ 85271)

FORCED DOWN - 7"

With rockin' music that relies on a heavy beat and a medium pace, Forced Down brings forth four songs with personal themes. The musical style, vocals, and lyrical content are reminiscent of Amenity, which isn't surprising considering the location and shared member. Damn good. - Kent (\$3 to Down Side; 2015 Garnet Ave. #5766; San Diego, CA 92109)

BILLINGSGATE - Reach Out 7"

Everything about this six song 7" is excellent, except the price. The lyrics are quite good, especially "Open Your Eyes," "Holdstrong," and "Won't Hang Myself," and the music is solid mosh hardcore with the occasional spurt of flare and style to give it originality. Fucking great! - Kent (A ridiculous \$4 to Victory Records; PO Box 197; Clarendon Hills, ILL 60514)

V/A - Look At All The Children Now... 12"

The cast includes such notables as Bad Trip, Gol, Moondog, S.F.A., and Team Effort, plus eight more. There is also a nice booklet inclosed that offers info about the bands and some commentary on the New York scene. A definite alternative to the thug-core that usually comes out of New York, and a required piece of wax, though the price might have been a bit lower. - Kent (\$8 to Evacuate Records; PO Box 2176; Times Square Station; New York, NY 10108)

CRIMPSHRINE/G-WHIZ - 7"

This is pop punk... G-Whiz sound incredibly similar to Free Will, while Crimpshrine have that melodic East Bay sound complete with coarse vocals. Both bands are good, and each gets their own side to do two songs and a lyric sheet/book, as well. ...and it's damn catchy. - Kent (No Reality Records)

The Red Barn, 4/13/90, photo Skindrud



MR. T EXPERIENCE - So Long Sucker 7"

The pop punk experience, with just a bit of an edge. The attitude is just having a good time and playing some rockin' tunes. "So Long Sucker" is easily forgotten, while "Zero" has an early punk feel that warrants a few attentive listens. Decent for what it is. - Kent (\$3 to Lookout Records; PO Box 1000; Laytonville, CA 95454)

HATE X9 - Apprehension 7"

From Utah comes a loud, squawking, thrashing hardcore band with solid political and autonomy promoting lyrics. The packaging is superb, and the music is frantic. Scatter. - Kent (\$3 to Raunch Records; 375 West 400 South; Salt Lake City, UT 84101)

UNCLE TUPELO - No Depression 12"

Where the fuck is the lyric sheet? While electric guitar folk rock doesn't usually interest me, Uncle Tupelo is pretty good at what they do. The guitar is solid and noisy, and the singing has an emotional feel. Dare it be said, progressive college... - Kent (Rockville Records)

CRAWLPAPPY - 12"

These six songs are surprisingly great. The sound is metal, and yet the guitar is more twisted than formatted, the singing isn't in a predictable metal style, and the music is plenty catchy and heavy. Damn motivating for a band that will be big time instantly. No lyric sheet, which is the only negative point. - Kent (\$6 to Blackout!; PO Box 544; Yonkers, NY 10710)

CRAWLPAPPY/SHEER TERROR - 7"

Suburban Voice #29 comes with a split 7", just as issue #28 did. The Crawlappy sound is experimental that relies on rhythm and a slow heavy drive, rather than on guitar trickery. Sheer Terror plays a medium paced repetitive droner with a sedate, but rough sounding Andrew Dice Clay on vocals. Enjoyable stuff, in moderation. - Kent (Suburban Voice; PO Box 1605; Lynn, MA 01903)

VICTIMS FAMILY - Things I Hate To Admit 12"

Punk, jazz, and thrash are all fused together and then twisted and contorted by Victims Family to create their unique sound. It is a good sound, and very interesting, though it can overpower the sense, in which case it becomes background noise. The lyrics are just as eclectic. Tight, intricate, and complicated can work, but it can also crash. Fortunately it works in this case. - Kent (Mordam Records; PO Box 988; San Francisco, CA 94101)

UNITED MUTATION - Freak Out 12"

Hailing from D.C., United Mutations has been at it since the very early '80s. This L.P. is a collection of early rare tracks. The sound begins as basic thrash, and it ends as medium tempo, twisted, and experimental nightmare rock. The singing is always a gruff and ugly experience, while the lyrics are simple and raw. The sax on "Manna" will kick your ass. United Mutation was definitely original and interesting. - Kent (Bitzcore)

RISE ABOVE - 7"

Combining clean hardcore speed with a tuneless and catchy punk rock influence, Belgium's Rise Above belt out three respectable tunes. The straight edge is present, and while "Real Deal" may be simple it is damn effective in displaying that philosophy, and "Beat It" and "What It Is (Unity)" are also well received. Good effort, and nice to see a female doing the straight edge thing. - Kent (Punk Etc. Records; PO Box 41 - 1800 Vilvoorde; Belgium)

SEIZURE - Seriously Delirious 12"

Seizure has been around for quite some time now, but this is their first 12" record. The sound is fast punk rock with a thrash influence, and the lyrics are belligerent political and social lyrics. Song titles like "Glam Rock Garbage Men" and "Accept Manipulation" sum up their lyrical approach. Their cover of "I'm On Fire" rocks hard, and "Fuck It Baby" is very Misfits sounding. Good in all respects. - Kent (\$6 to Seizure; 74 Osborne Ave.; Norwalk, CT 06855)

BORDERLINE - Unseen 7"

In general Borderline has pretty good lyrics. While there are two songs about friendships gone bad, there is also a political song that makes references to South Africa, and a track about doing it yourself. Musically, they're not fantastic, but they are solid and pretty powerful. The effort is definitely there. - Kent (A ridiculous \$4 to Conversion Records; 26861 Trabuco Road; Suite E-143; Mission Viejo, CA 92691)

RED ARMY - Misspent Youth 7"

Surprise. Red Army appears from the wastelands of the South with a totally original, energetic and uplifting combo of funk, hardcore and ska. The lyrics are poetic in their quality, and their ode to racial equality is one of the better approaches to surface. Absolutely great. Who says punk rock is dead? - Kent (\$3 to Robot Records; 486 41st St. #1; Oakland, CA 94609)

KINGS OF OBLIVION - All This Madness 12"

The Kings of Oblivion play tight and intricate music that utilizes plenty of varying breaks and changes, but unfortunately an entire album of this begins to destroy the nerves. The songs eventually begin to fade into simple noise. There is something to be said for simplicity. Decent lyrics in a typical U.K. political and social style. - Kent (In Your Face Records)

GETEILTE KOPFE - Don't Ask.. 12"

Messy and annoying post punk type stuff that falls under the alternative rock heading is what fills the grooves of Don't Ask... The sound is abrasive and there is a funk and jazz influence. The lyrics are good, the female vocals are decent, and the sax is okay, but in the end this just isn't my thing. - Kent (Artland Records)

PROCESS OF ELIMINATION - Time To Care demo

There are twelve songs here. The sound is pretty good, and the lyrics are decent, especially "Anger In Our Eyes," which proclaims our need to organize. The music is medium tempo hardcore with loud, rough vocals. There is also a good deal of variety in the style. A good start. - Kent (P.O.E.; 309 Main St S.; Bethlehm, CT 06751)

OUTSPOKEN - Look Beyond demo

There are four songs featured here, and while the music is pretty powerful and energetic, the style is fairly hip for the day, and the lyrics are very, very short and simple. In general, the songs are short, almost to the point of feeling incomplete, which is actually cool. - Kent

DEATH YOUTH FOUNDATION - Walk On demo

This supposedly will one day become a 7". As always D.Y.F.'s strongest point is their lyrics which are political, direct, and well done. Their music is also good, though not quite as good. The style utilizes both thrash and cleaner, heavier hardcore, and it is always pretty fast. Good job. - Kent (D.Y.F.; 9215 Ahmann; Whittier, CA 90603)

FLAGRANT VIOLATION - Breakthrough demo
Criticism's first; "Hanoi Jane" is a uninformed and patriotic diatribe against Jane Fonda's trip to Vietnam during the "police action," which is a heavy turn off. Otherwise, the lyrics are good and the music is good as well. The sound is an assortment of tempos and styles, but it's always somewhat interesting. - Kent (\$4 to Road #3 Box 27H-1; Charteroi, PA 15022)



UCSB Old Gym, 3/1090, photo McClard

PLATYPUS SCOURGE - Destroyed demo

The second Platypus Scourge effort is very similar to the last one with rough garage style rock or thrash punk. The lyrics are again in the social, personal realm, while the silly lyrical topics have been dropped. Better than not bad. - Kent (\$2 to 3536 Mulholland Way; Sacramento, CA 95821)

V/A - Small Pond demo

There are eleven bands featured here from the Boise, Idaho area. The concept of a comp demo based around a specific location is cool, but unfortunately most of the bands aren't that interesting. Predominantly they are all post punk, pop, alternative college rock bands, which just doesn't set fires. Professional packaging. - Kent (Josh Crookham; 2093 Manitou; Boise, ID 83706)

CAPTAIN 9's & THE KNICKERBOCKER TRIO - Scum

Of The Earth demo

First off there's no lyric sheet, but "fortunately" you can understand the singing. Unfortunately, the lyrics aren't too serious. For the most part they are just funny, silly topics that are inoffensive. The music is rough garage style punk rock with some speed and bite. Decent stuff, but real lyrics would be preferred. - Kent (Loud & Noisy; 8439 Cayuga Dr.; Stockton, CA 95210)

EMOTIVE DRIVE - demo

With a powerful sound that is dominated by buzzsaw guitar and strong vocals, Emotive Drive bang out some damn good hardcore in the N.Y. mosh metal style. At times Raw Deal comes to mind, as anachronistic as that is. The concepts presented are also good, thus making this a great demo. - Kent (Emotive Drive; 69 Bernie Road; Belleville, NJ 07109)

MALICIOUS ONSLAUGHT - Thrashed Black demo

It is questionable whether death metal can ever be good, but Malicious Onslaught certainly is not any good. The music is boring and totally by the death metal numbers. - Kent (16 Madison Court; STONY POINT, NY 10980)

STAND TO REASON - Loud, Straight, and Proud demo
Okay, Stand To Reason is indeed a simple and basic straight edge band, with predictable music and lyrics, but certain aspects seem to show hope. "Mr. Silverspoon" has a good point, and while the lyrics are generic the messages are good. Strive for some growth. - Kent (\$3 to 8125 W. Clarendon Ave.; Phoenix, AZ 85033)

V/A - D.C. TODAY demo

Agent 86, Holy Rollers, Far Cry, Shudder To Think, Choke, and 26 other bands are featured here. The sound quality is good, and the variety is very vast. As far as the music goes, some bands are good, and some are bad. Recommended for those that are into the whole D.C. trip, not just Dischord. - Kent (\$3 to Clockwork Tapes; 2417 Hidden Valley Lane; Silver Springs, MD 20904)

4FRONT - Pell Mell demo

This Texas band has a post punk or progressive sound that might be considered somewhat pop orientated, though gravel pop might be more like it. A lyric sheet would have been nice, but still 4front's sound, which ultimately is a rough form of rock, is enough to make this enjoyable. - Kent (5300 Aurora Dr.; Austin, TX 78756)

76% UNCERTAIN - Where's The Lid? tape

This is the 76% Uncertain anthology. The 28 songs (none repeated) featured span the entire length of their existence, and the sound quality is consistently good with most tracks being live. If you were into 76% then definitely check this out, if not, well you should've been. Yes, "Coffee Achiever" is here. - Kent (TPOS; 12 Mill Plain Road; Danbury, CT 06811)

THINK TWICE - It's The Time demo

The recording is not really listenable. The vocals are too loud, and the drums and bass are lost in the noisy production. Basically, the sound is simple hardcore thrash type stuff. The lyrics are the high point. They mean well and the topics covered are important. It's The Time lives up to the demo category; pretty raw sounding. - Kent (Conzato Andrea; Via Brig. Liguria, 24; 36100 Vicenza; Italy)

RESOLUTION

- demo
The similarities to Brotherhood aren't too obvious or distinct. In fact, other than Ron's vocal style, Resolution doesn't sound much at all like Brotherhood. The style is much more modern sounding, which isn't bad. The lyrics are all about personal behavior. Pretty good. - Kent (Overkill Records; PO Box 20224; Seattle, WA 98102)

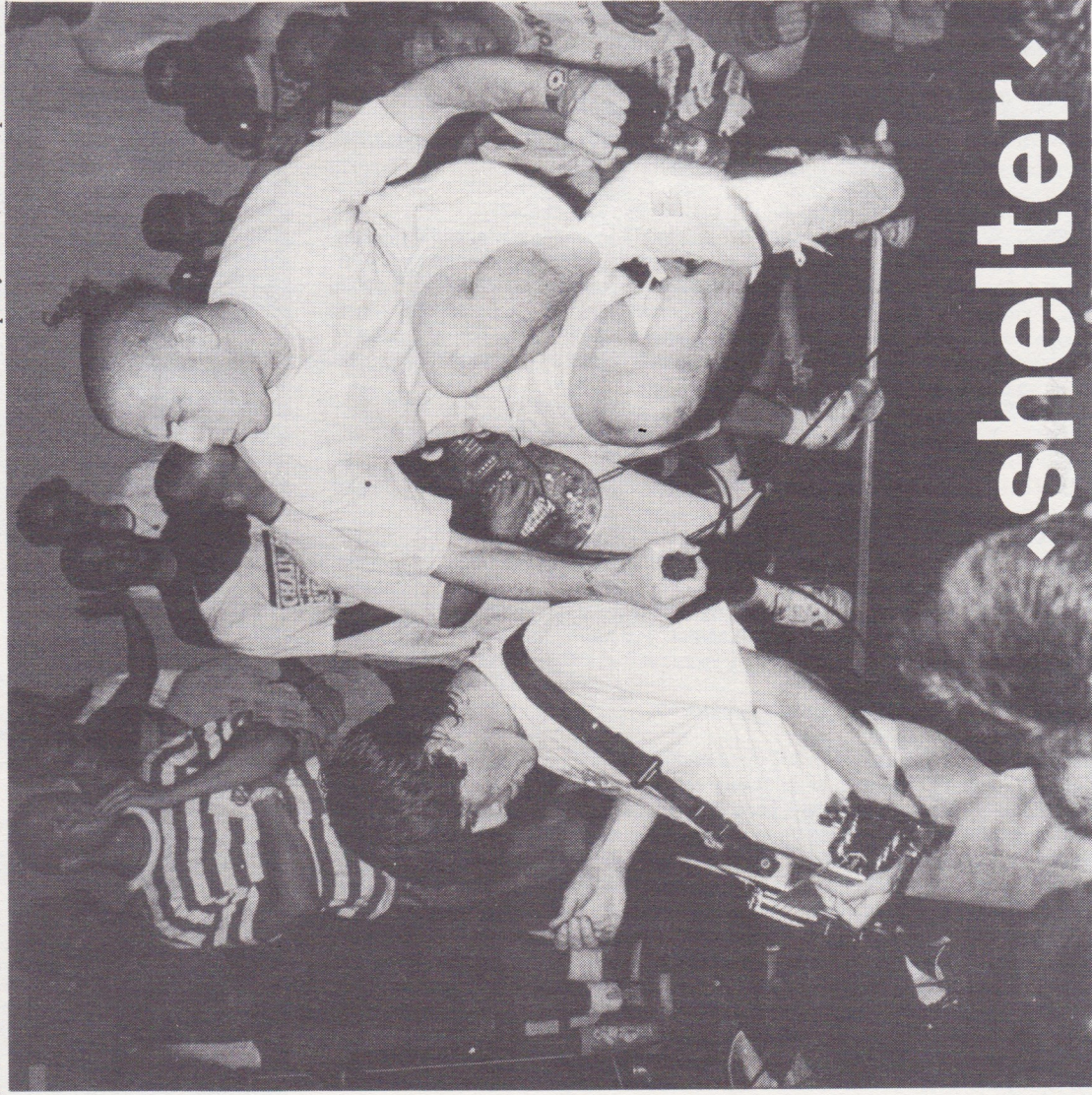
GLEE CLUB - Far Away Lands demo

The newer Glee Club sound is much more polished and tame, and the singing is almost too much like singing. The lyrics have also changed a lot. The straight edge themes are gone, and instead the "believe in yourself" theme appears. Hmm, I think I liked the old Glee Club much better. - Kent (Glee Club; 26 Hayes Road; East Greenbush, NY 12061)

BORN AGAINST - demo

With great intelligent protest lyrics, Born Against smash their noisy pissed off hardcore into your bleeding ears. Angry as hell. - Kent (Born Against; PO Box 1145; Cooper Station; N.Y., NY 10276)

Spanky's Cafe; 7/22/90, photo McClard



♦shelter♦

Downcast are my friends, and yeah I'm biased, but I think they are one of the best bands to come along in quite some time. They have inspired me with their idealism, their innocence, their honesty, and sometimes even their naivete. Downcast means something. It means something to them and it means something to me. - Kent

KENT: Why Downcast? Why did you choose that as a name?

BRENT: Well, when we first chose the name it didn't have any specific meaning. We were just throwing around a lot of stupid things and somebody came up with that, but it really didn't mean anything. It just sounded nice or whatever, but then after a while we just decided that if it had to mean anything, and everyone wants to ascribe some sort of meaning to everything, that it would just be sort of a point of ascension that you have to be depressed about the things around you in order to take action against them. That's Downcast.

KENT: So kind of a depressing name?

BRENT: Yeah, I think it is. I think, if you know us, it's good for us.

KENT: Do you think that's what your sets are like?

BRENT: I don't know about during the set, but after, every fucking show is like that.

KENT: Why?

BRENT: I just have such a high ideal about what we can do during a set, and how much we can get across.

KEVIN: And you can't just shut it off right after it's done.

BRENT: It never seems like we get it across, you know, I'm never happy with what we've done after we've done it. I've never had a show where I've been comfortable about what I've done.

DAVE: We need the room for progression, too.

KENT: In what way?

DAVE: Well, if you're totally happy after one set then you're not going to...

KEVIN: You try to live up to that every time.

KENT: Why are you not happy, because you're not getting your message across or because you're not performing up to what you...

BRENT: I think some of it for me has to do with not being able to play everything the way I want to, but also playing guitar there's absolutely no vocal expression in that, and that's really frustrating because the lyrics are the most important thing in the band, and having nothing to do with them during the live show is frustrating.

KEVIN: That's why it is easy for me to get into it because I have the lyrics in my head and it's pretty straight forward, and the emotion just comes from that, but Brent and Dave just have to express the way they are feeling through musical notes, which is kind of difficult.

BRENT: Sometimes it is okay, if you have the chance to think about things before the show, and kind of figure it out for yourself then it's going to work out well, and there will be a lot more expression on my part, but it seems like every time we play it's always so rushed. We're always in charge of the P.A. and trying to get everyone there on time, which has yet to happen. There's just so much going on, and then by the time you go up to play it's just music. There's nothing more to it than that.

KEVIN: Sometimes.

BRENT: Sometimes, yeah.

KENT: So far have you had any response to what you are doing lyrically that has been reaffirming?

KEVIN: It's great after shows when people ask you what the songs are about, because sometimes in between songs I talk too fast or I slur or whatever, people don't always get it, and it's nice to actually have them come up and ask afterwards. That woman that was with Fuel that one time was talking to us about "They Are Not," and people talk to us about "Schedule" and stuff, which is really great because when you're playing you basically have to express the idea in a minute and a half or two and a half minutes, you know, and it's just pure anger. People don't hear lyrics in hardcore, and if they want to get anything out of it then they have to come up and ask you or you have to express everything in between songs and that's real difficult and it's just kind of nice when people come up afterwards.

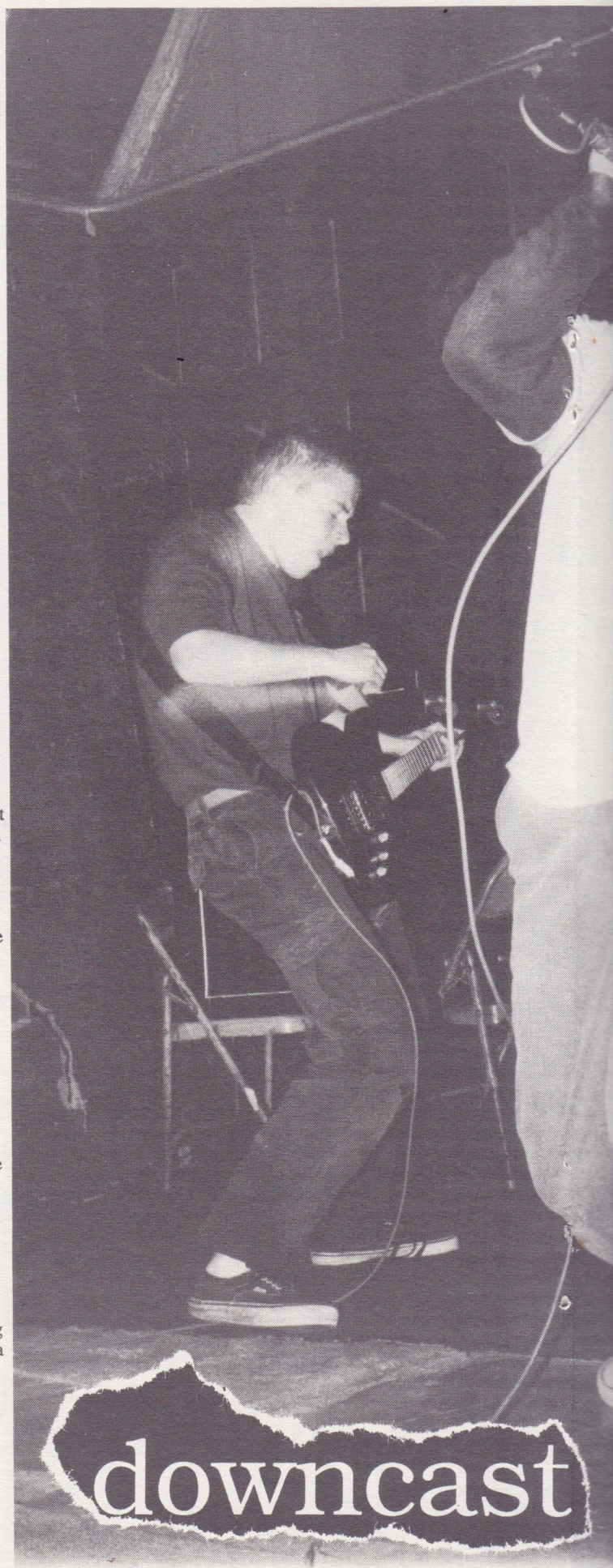
BRENT: In a sense the music almost limits the message that you can put across in the live show because so many people in hardcore are just into the music, you know? It's not really, it's really hard, especially with the P.A. shit we've been using to hear what's going on. You can't really decipher what Kevin's trying to say, and a lot of it is just music, and that shouldn't be the most important part of the set, and I've always wanted to just... If we were ever having a really shitty set, just stop playing and to just recite the lyrics and just talk about it with people. I almost think it would be better.

KENT: Well, you always talk between songs.

BRENT: There's so little time, and we always seem to be so rushed when we play, and how can you do justice to a subject that is as big as sexism in a minute or whatever? It's almost ridiculous to think that you can.

KENT: Have you had anyone take an antagonistic stance to any of your lyrics?

KEVIN: Well, I think at every show, not every show, but a lot of shows just have



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The Red Barn, 3/3/90, photo McClard



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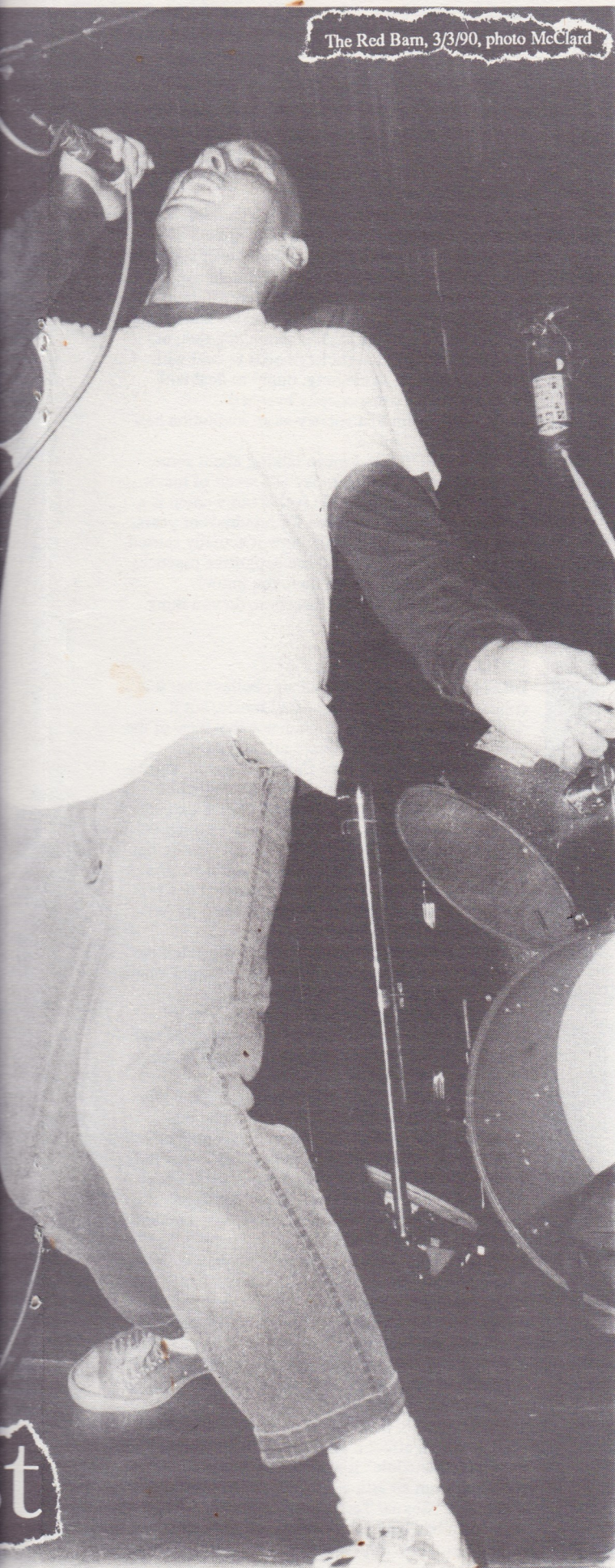
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The Red Barn, 3/3/90, photo McClard

downcast

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The Red Barn, 3/3/90, photo McClard



hecklers, just people that are going to say shit about no matter what you're talking about on stage. No matter what, that's why they come to shows, they just get off on trying to see if they can get a rise out of you, and it's happened before. When you're up there you're in a pretty emotional state and so I've kind of jumped on people a little bit and yelled a few times, which was kind of lame on my part. Brent summed it up at the last show. He said the people that want to listen are going to listen, and they're who were trying to reach. There are some people who just don't want to listen and they're going to talk in the back or whatever. I just wish I wasn't so emotional and I could just shut them out.

KENT: On the subject of crowd reaction, what kind of response do you want and what kind of response do you not want to get from people?

BRENT: It's so hard to say, I don't even know how people should respond, you know, I mean, I know I don't want people to slam dance and that's a different subject in itself.

KENT: Well, no, that is also a response.

BRENT: I don't want that, I don't want the typical hardcore punk rock reaction, I just think it has been going on so long, it's time for something else.

KENT: But you're playing a music that's in that realm.

BRENT: I know, it's limiting, and I always question myself why we are playing the kind of music we do because we are inherently going to evoke those kind of responses just by playing hardcore. I don't know why I like hard music.

KENT: But do you think your music is still a good conveyor of ideas?

BRENT: Yeah, I think it is because there is so much fucking rage in what we are saying.

KEVIN: It's honest.

BRENT: The music is angry, it's supposed to be, I want it to be.

KENT: What about people singing along and stuff like that?

KEVIN: It's kind of weird, I don't know, it's just weird. I've never really had that experience before this, and I guess it kind of shows that they know your lyrics and maybe they're getting into it. It just depends, because when they are only singing along to probably the least important of our songs, "Everything," then you tend to wonder.

BRENT: It's good because it's a way that people can show that they care about it, that they are taking the time to read the lyrics at least, but it's bad in the sense that when I hear it I feel like we're just being typecast as another sing-a-long band, and I don't want to be another sing-a-long band.

KENT: Almost all of the different types of bands are sing-a-long bands.

BRENT: Yeah, everyone sings along to Fugazi... It's just strange not having dealt with it before. I never really expected it.

KENT: Have you guys played yet where there was a big pit or anything?

BRENT: I have no clue.

KEVIN: I don't think so. Anything that we've had we've tried to stifle it, like at the Barn all I have to do is basically walk out in the middle of it and sing the songs, and let everything just kind of mellow down, but like at U.C.S.B. when we played with Fugazi I think that kind of got a little bit going and I doubt if I can control 250 people. You know, "Stop slam dancing," and they're all going to stop. I don't think that's ever going to happen.

KENT: Would you like to do it?

BRENT: I would, I really hate slam dancing. I wish people wouldn't do it. I met this person after Fugazi and she said that she really wanted to come up front and see what was going on, but she couldn't because people were slamming. We're totally defeating ourselves if there is even one person that wants to listen and wants to get into it and they can't because of crowd reaction then I think we have lost. It's just totally intimidating. I can't remember how many times I've been to shows and felt totally intimidated because there are twenty people going around in a circle. It's just stupid, and there's no expression going on in slam dancing, and I don't know if there ever was, but now it's just ridiculous that it's still happening.

KENT: Besides, I mean, other than playing you've at times tried to get people to stop during other band's sets by getting in people's way, do you think that is something that is legitimate?

KEVIN: It just seems like, I can understand that people would want to slam dance, I mean, that's just the way punk rockers are and at the Country Club there is plenty of room, go at it, I'm going to move to the back, people can move to the side, or whatever, but when you're at some place like a garage or a barn or something that's really small and there's limited amount of space five people slam dancing actually ruins the show for the other thirty, forty, fifty, sixty, or seventy people that are there. It's just kind of lame, so we just try to stifle it.

DAVE: It's weird because how can one person, what gives... it's like the question "what would give one person the right to stop it?" I don't like it, either, but...

BRENT: The person who is doing it (*slamming*) has no right to do it. I think you have the prerogative to stop that sort of thing because it is, I don't want to over blow the whole issue, but it is unjust. It is unfair because three people are wrecking the show.

KENT: But from the slammer's perspective what right do you have to tell them to stop?

BRENT: Everyone has a right to do what they want as long as they don't interfere

with other people, and slamming is interfering with other people, so I think you have the right to stop it. It's the same thing as racism, you know, I mean what right do I have to tell a white racist to not be a racist? So long as he doesn't fuck with anyone he can hate anyone he wants, but as soon as he starts to involve other people in his hatred then it's wrong, and I think you have, not only the right, but the obligation to oppose it.

KENT: On a different subject, since you have the two songs, "Schedule" and "They Are Not," about sexism, does it seem strange to be playing songs that are about that topic when 90% of your audience is always male?

BRENT: Yeah.

KEVIN: that's what fuels it even more because that's pretty much the target audience.

DAVE: Exactly, it's addressed to the male audience and their reactions towards women. That's never bothered me at all.

KEVIN: If you're singing "women are not sexual objects" to 400 women...

KENT: True, my question is that obviously because that's your audience then something inherently in your music, either in your music or in society is making it that only women are going to shows, that's more my question.

BRENT: It's not just our shows, it's hardcore in general. I have a really hard time believing that it's just a coincidence that hardcore is so male dominated. It just seems like there is something inherently sexist about it, whether it's the aggression at the shows or whatever, I don't know.

KENT: But in general isn't all music male dominated? I mean the women you find in most music are simply girlfriends.

BRENT: That's true. It is true.

KENT: Unless you want to look at rap music, but that's even worse.

BRENT: Yeah, it is. It's a lot worse.

KENT: On that topic, you've talked a lot about that at shows and stuff, and I've always been curious how you feel about pornography and stuff like that.

KEVIN: I'm against censorship, but I don't know, it's weird because you can always take the stance of why are they doing it if it is so unjust, why are they doing it? They're making a living, and they can't make a living at anything else, or maybe they've been socialized to believe that's an acceptable way to...

KENT: Are you talking from the models point of view?

KEVIN: Yeah, but I don't know, I think it's pretty gross. I don't know what really to say.

DAVE: It's very exploitive.

KENT: Is there some kind of solution then, or is it...

BRENT: The solution is that society needs to stop demanding it. Society demands sex and that's why pornography exists. Pornography exists in its hardcore form and it exists in MTV and it exists in advertising. When society stops demanding it then it will stop, but society is not going to.

KENT: Why do you think that?

BRENT: In society there

are just so many frustrations toward sex, I mean you've got the whole Roman Catholic ethic, which as much as people hate to say that they are influenced by it, I think that everyone is. Sex is still "dirty" in this society, but still I mean the advertising industry puts it out in everything and the music industry puts it out in everything and the art world puts it out in just about everything, and so it is everywhere and you've got this double standard regarding sex where people are told that they want it and yet they are told that they can't have it because it's dirty and it's wrong, and so people are always confounded by it, and then you get all this stuff like pornography.

KENT: What about like the advertisement realm, do you think there should be limits on that kind of thing, on what they can do?

BRENT: I don't know, I would never, I mean I would never support governments limiting something like that because I think the government's role in deciding moral issues should be absolutely nil, but I mean it's obviously disgusting turning on the television set and seeing how much women are used to sell products. It's something that, as idealistic as it sounds, it's something that society needs to deal with. I don't think the government can limit something, ought to deal with something like that, but I don't think that society ever will.

KENT: Do you think it's a problem that society as an institution has created, or in people themselves?

BRENT: I don't know, it's hard to say, I mean talking about something like sexism, the sexism that we know today is a result of hundreds of generations of sexism. The way that people feel about women is a result of the way people have felt about women for hundreds of years. So advertising is the same way. It's hard to say how it actually started, if somewhere when society first formed that these exploitive practices first came about, or whether the first man did that, you know?

KENT: Do you think, in a slightly different direction, do you think that the hardcore scene is sexist?

BRENT: I do, I think so.

KENT: In what way?

BRENT: Well again, I just can't believe that it is a coincidence, it may be true of all music, but it doesn't seem like it's a coincidence that 99% of the people that go to hardcore are males, and it's especially bad in Southern California where there are hardly any women involved with it at all. I don't know why it is, it just doesn't seem like, it's not only women, but a lot of people are turned off by it, not by the thoughts and the intellect in it, but by the aggression and the violence at shows, and I'm not talking about skinhead violence, but I'm talking about just slamming, people being aggressive. I consider it violent.

KENT: What about the music? Do you think the music is inherently aggressive? Do you think that is included in that?

BRENT: Well hardcore is aggressive.

KEVIN: There is a difference between anger and aggression. You can feel angry and bitter without being aggressive...

BRENT: Women feel the same feelings that men feel. The anger in hardcore should not be just focused at the shows. It shouldn't be contained to that. The anger is about issues larger than just going around in a circle. That's what the anger is about. So I think every human being feels that anger towards society, I mean I don't see it as necessarily the music that turns people off.

KENT: On the subject of sexism, in your song, "Schedule," about rape, why do you think that rape is so prevalent in our society?

BRENT: I think rape is just a natural by-product of sexism in this society.

KENT: But more specifically, do you think that it is an aspect of some kind of oppression, economic, or social?

BRENT: Yeah, it is. I don't think it's designed to do that, but in effect it does that. The whole thing about, in "Schedule" it says sexual terrorism, and I took that from an article by Carol Scheffield, and it was called "Sexual Terrorism," and she just drew all these parallels between political terrorism and sexual terrorism. She was just saying that in effect



The Red Bam, 3/3/90, photo McClard

the two are the same because they systematically oppress a people, and so I think rape does that. Every time a woman turns on the news, like that whole thing about Mark Lepine in Montreal, I think it was, when he killed 9 women with a rifle, he went through the engineering school. I mean, obviously the news casters aren't meaning to scare women by that, but when a person turns on the television and they hear about someone of their own gender being killed just because of their gender, how can you not be scared by that? Mark Lepine was not completely unique, I think there are a lot of people like that in the world that harbor that same kind of misogyny.

KENT: It seems to me that sexism and racism serve the same purposes for somebody. They are both oppressions and it seems like there must be some reason why it occurs, other than a legacy of something that's happened before.

BRENT: But the faces of racism and sexism are changing a lot now, I mean, after the civil rights movement in the '60s racism has changed a lot, and since slavery it's changed a lot. Before it was outright an economic thing, it was really obvious, and it still is an economic thing. I think that is the biggest factor in racism, you know it's just the economy of it because if they were to somehow bring 22 million blacks up to the standards of most whites then obviously there would be some sort of economic disparity in there. It's hard to say if sexism is the same way. I think with sexism there is so much more of a legacy of just, it's not economic really, it's hard to say what it is. It seems like it is almost... I don't know.

KENT: Why do you think that women are so complacent about the whole issue of rape and sexism? It seems to me that most women are totally accepting of the way it is.

BRENT: Yeah, I don't know why.

KENT: I mean here you are, a bunch of guys in a band doing these two songs about it, but you shouldn't be the ones doing it.

BRENT: I know that. It's ultimately women that are going to have to stop rape because it is really obvious that the majority of males are just content with the way it is. They're not threatened by anything. When you're in control it's easy to be complacent. I think especially in the '80s and '90s people have been so complacent towards everything. I mean a lot of people would say that feminism is dead now, and a lot of people aren't thinking about the issues, and a lot of people just assume that sexism is gone, not really gone, but that so much has been done to eradicate it that it's almost a non-issue now. I mean, a lot of... It's true of all people that once they're happy they won't continue with their struggle, and a lot of women have been given the opportunity to have a career and make money, and for most people that's the ends of life... just to make money, to be happy, to be personally happy, and once that's accomplished then what more is there to do for yourself, and most people don't have that sense of unselfishness to keep going. I'm certainly not accusing women of that, but it's true of all people.

KENT: On a completely different subject, in "Lie" you're talking about vivisection and how it's not working, but what do you think about all the past vivisection that has gone on in the past to develop a lot of cures and stuff that we use today?

KEVIN: Well, there's an organization called Suppress, and I've heard them speak, and seen their film on it, and they claim that like one to two percent of vivisection has actually accomplished anything. They claim that the polio vaccine and all these vaccines that supposedly are supposed to work are... all it is is a cycle in people's health, a cycle in human health, and it always has been a cycle, and polio goes down and goes up in people. I don't know that there has been many beneficial things from it, and if there have then great, now we know what they are, why not cut back? We have the technology to at least cut back, and I don't think there should be any at all. Sociological aspects and benefits are just complete fraud. There's nothing to it.

BRENT: We're getting to the point now where so many of the diseases that vivisection is being used for, I won't use the term vivisection, but animal research, is just trying to work on diseases that are preventable now, like aids and cancer. There are, if the money had been spent early on in the Reagan administration to educate people, then the aids epidemic wouldn't be what it is now. I read a book by Randy Schiltz and he was saying that it took... I guess aids came out in '81, that was when it was first diagnosed, and the Reagan administration never even allocated any funds until late '84, I think. They had known about it for a full three years before they actually did anything, and so in those three years where... I mean the majority of people who are affected and are getting it now actually acquired it between those years. If the Reagan administration had actually done something about it, educated people and stressed safer sex then a lot of the problems

wouldn't exist now, and you could circumvent the use of animals by doing that. The same goes for cancer, there are, I mean not to change the topic, but vegetarianism and other things which would greatly decrease your risk of cancer, but people are ignorant of those.

KENT: Do you think on a scientific level it doesn't work?

KEVIN: Definitely. Definitely. With computer technology you can take tissue samples, I've read things where you can take a small portion of a tissue sample from say a liver and grow and entire liver from it and do tests on that. It has no nerves, no ability to suffer.

BRENT: No scientist would argue that, you can't study a liver outside of the living system. I've argued with scientists, not scientists but Grad students about it and they are just totally convinced that all those things don't work. When you talk to them it is really difficult to get anywhere, and you always wind up at an impasse, but I think there is definitely room for people allocating funds to discover alternative means of testing drugs and finding cures for things.

KENT: Do you use products that are tested on animals?

KEVIN: I try to get myself not to, and try to minimize, but it's pretty difficult. I'm still in the educational process, you know, I'm still trying to figure it out, I mean so many things are, I'm trying to figure out what is and what isn't, and what my alternatives are. It's a process where hopefully I will eventually become animal experimentation, animal research free. Not hopefully, I definitely plan on it, but it's just going to take some time.

BRENT: It's so hard not to use any, it's almost impossible. It's not necessary that animal products are in all these things, it's just been that way for so long and no one has demanded an alternative to it yet.

KENT: To change the subject again, you all work at various soup kitchens and shelters, can you just elaborate? Describe what you do?

KEVIN: Basically, every Tuesday and Saturday Dave goes down and every Saturday I go down to East L.A., or South Central L.A. I should say, on skid row and feed people with an organization called Front Line started by a guy named Ray Castalanni, and it's just grass roots support for people that have no homes...

DAVE: It's not so much that they don't have homes, it's just that they are hungry because the sole purpose of Front Line is to eliminate hunger. The only way that can be done is if people like Ray were to feed them. They're not trying to make their lives better, they're not trying to change their entire lives, just eradicate hunger right there on the spot. Someone like Ray can do it, someone like Ray, if he had the support of just Mayor Tom Bradley, which he is not getting on any level, then he could eradicate hunger in Los Angeles, and it could grow from there. I mean, I believe that Ray Costalanni could do it in the United States, obviously on a giant level.

KEVIN: I think it's possible too.

DAVE: He's getting absolutely no support.

KEVIN: And he's still feeding 1,500 people a week.

DAVE: Exactly, and he's only getting the support of volunteers, I mean obviously more than just us two. I mean there is just a whole slew of them down there and they are just the most wonderful people you'll ever meet.

KENT: Why do you think there is no support for that kind of a thing?

DAVE: They don't want to bother with the problem. I firmly believe, that they don't want to bother. They just have more important things on their level for them to do. I mean they have money to be made. It's like how we were talking the other night, the only solution they will ever come up with is to just gather them all and hold them in some little holding cell until whatever event, such as the Olympics (1984), that is going on is over. That's the only solution they'll come up with. I just don't think they want to bother with the problem.

KEVIN: Living in a capitalist society people don't want to see someone get something for nothing. It's so competitive, and free enterprise is so prevalent. We all just want to make money, and people that don't want to fall into that, or people that can't fall into that, or for whatever reason aren't making enough money to buy food or shelter or whatever, tough, they don't deserve it, they didn't earn it.

BRENT: Yeah, capitalism breeds self-centeredness. It's just the way they are. They can only think about themselves because the system will only allow them to. We just do not have time to think about other people because you're always trying to fend for yourself.

KENT: What do you think there are so many homeless people?

Obviously that's an economic question...

KEVIN: Overpopulation, I think there is just lack of adequate housing...

BRENT: It's not overpopulation, there's plenty of resources in this country

DAVE: It's just not being used

KEVIN: I agree, but in this country. I mean, there's so many people, it's lack of support, there's so many people just in Los Angeles itself, there is not adequate housing, low income housing for people there...

BRENT: But there could be.

KEVIN: There could be, yeah, but there isn't.

BRENT: But that's not the problem of overpopulation, that's the government's fault. That's because of the unwillingness on the government's part to spend money on housing.

KENT: I think population, I mean you do have a problem with population in terms of people in the low income brackets having far too many children and not to say that they should be sterilized or anything or any stupid right-wing ideas that they come up with, but definitely there is a problem there that they need better education on their plight.

BRENT: Yeah, it's really education that's key. I think, well obviously during the last ten years planned parenthood has been slashed to the bare bones, and I think the Reagan administration has done more to propagate misery in this country than anyone has.

DAVE: To be followed by the Bush administration.

BRENT: To be followed by god knows who.

KENT: Do you think that the homelessness issue is going to be building on people's minds, or do you think it will just continue to get worse?

BRENT: It's going to get to the point where people are going to have to start thinking about it, I mean if we keep running our economy the way we are running it now then there...

KEVIN: It's not going to be so removed.

BRENT: The number of homeless people has increased so dramatically in the last ten years, and it will continue to do so.

KEVIN: it won't just be some burns down in South-Central L.A., it's

going to be in suburbs, it's going to be all over, and people just won't be able to ignore it.

BRENT: The trickle down theory is absolute bullshit. It can work for only so long. The rich will get richer and the poor will become homeless. Eventually someone's going to do something about it.

KEVIN: People are right now. It'll just be a larger scale.

BRENT: Yeah, eventually I think we will have another '60s again as soon as things get shitty enough. Obviously not with all the...

KENT: Hippies.

BRENT: Yeah, not with all that, but something where people are a little elevated in their consciousness.

KENT: Do you think that our economic system can allow for there not to be homeless people? Because it seems to me that that is a by-product that must be there. There must always be people to create demand for jobs and to create demand for...

BRENT: Not homelessness. I think capitalism needs poverty, but it doesn't need necessarily homelessness. We can still house people. I mean people that are in public housing are not affluent by any means. They are still suffering, they're still trying to make ends meet. I think capitalism will always have that.

KEVIN: But there is no reason for people to be sleeping on the street getting malathion sprayed on them because they don't have anything on their heads.

KENT: You've also tried to set up some different shows to benefit the homeless, do you think that that is something that, you know that benefit type things are something that the hardcore scene can actually do to make some kind of a small difference?

KEVIN: Definitely.

BRENT: Yeah. We've been, in the last month we've been really lax about doing anything like that, and we need to start doing something with it...

DAVE: A lot more...

BRENT: A lot more, because originally that was so much part of the drive of this band, actually being able to affect a change out side of hardcore, and do some good for other people besides the kids who come to shows. It's doubtful if we do that, but I mean it's obvious when we can raise money for a homeless group that we've done something worthwhile, and I really think one of the strong points of hardcore is its potential for doing good outside of itself, but it has never happened except Washington (D.C.); that's really the only place where they've recognized the potential that hardcore has to do that.

KENT: Why do you think that's true?

KEVIN: This is just a real young scene, I think.

There's just lots of kids that are into hardcore and they say "let's get a band so we can play shows and have fun." I think it's such a fun thing, that's what they think about a lot, in fact we've had people in our band before that just wanted to do this band because it was fun, and that was a slight discrepancy and they're no longer with us.

BRENT: I don't think any of us are doing this because it's fun. I think this band has been the biggest pain in the ass that I've had in my life, seriously.

KENT: I'm sure you get something out of it.

BRENT: Yeah, I do, but I think that I've put so much more into it then I've gotten out of it. That's the way I feel now.

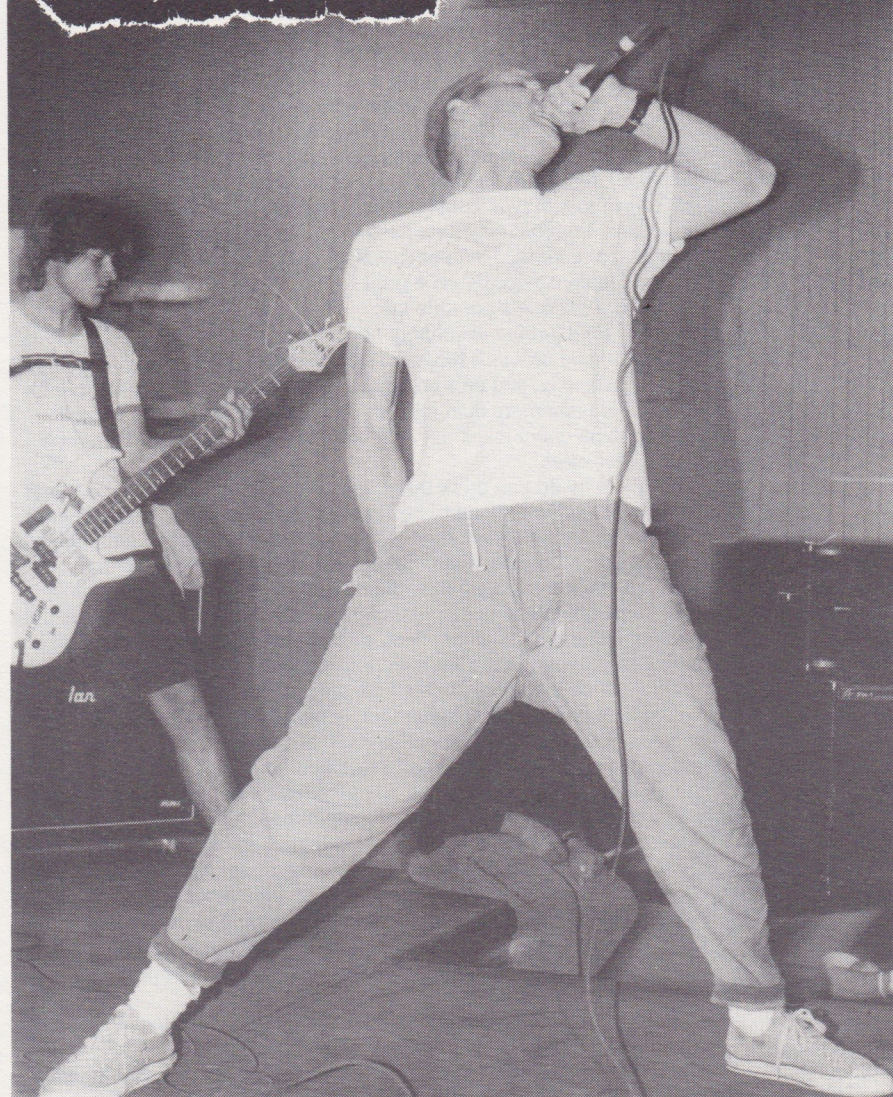
KENT: On those same lines, obviously you haven't played at any giant clubs, is that something that concerns you; clubs and door prices, and product prices, and just the commercialism in hardcore?

BRENT: Yeah, with the demo we tried to just do it as cheaply as we could to show everyone else that it can be done, and I think it came out really well considering how much it costs (\$1). We'll never play the Country Club and we always try to avoid high door prices.

KEVIN: It also comes with size, I mean it's real tough... we can just go "fine we're not going to play your fucking shows" and then people go "fine, who are you? Who cares?" I think, hopefully, I'm not talking to get huge to get huge, I'm talking the bigger you get the more influence you have.

BRENT: Yeah, I think we'll have more control over the

UCSB Old Gym, 3/10/90, photo Skindrud



places we can play.

KEVIN: That would be highly beneficial.

BRENT: Yeah, look at Fugazi, I mean they are absolutely huge and they've got so much control over clubs now. There's absolutely no band in California that could play the Country Club and do it for \$6. It would be really nice to have that kind of control.

KENT: Do you think that, from my point of view that whole independent aspect of hardcore is really important, do you think that is something that people are still concerned with?

BRENT: I don't know if people are concerned with it anymore. It seems like with straight edge in the last three years it has become such a, not really commercial, but very close to mainstream movement. I mean the way kids are looking, case in point, myself. There's just not a whole lot of stress on being alternative anymore, and in the past I've always ridiculed the whole notion as not being important and there are other things that hardcore could do to be more positive like doing benefits, but I'm starting to realize the value of having a truly alternative scene just because society is such a corruptible lie.

KENT: Obviously you've been growing, do you think you'll have the capability of being an influence in Southern California?

KEVIN: I think so, especially... It depends, you can't predict the future, but we're going to get a very good deal going out with your 'zine just because you are so influential and in a positive or negative way you distribute to 2,000 people and we're going to get excellent distribution across the country and in Southern California, and I don't know, it's hard to say, I mean it could catch on like wildfire or where people are just "these guys are fucking lame, why did Kent blow it?"

BRENT: There is a real chance that we could alienate ourselves, and I've been starting to feel that already. Especially at the last Barn show when we were trying to stop people from slamming and everyone got really fucking pissed.

KENT: But that wasn't when you were playing.

BRENT: No, it wasn't but I mean that's something we could do as a band when we speak out against them. We could very well alienate ourselves from a lot of people because for a lot of people hardcore is just a social outlet; it's something to do to have fun.

KEVIN: That's a chance.

KENT: But don't you think, that Barn show perse, I felt like the majority of the people there were glad that we were doing what we were doing.

BRENT: Yeah they were.

KENT: And it felt like to me that there were other people that were willing to do that but they never thought of that as an option.

BRENT: There may be a real silent part of the hardcore audience that may become more vocal. God, it would be so cool if everyone...

KEVIN: Swarmed the slam pit and filled the big moat with people and just stood there.

BRENT: Not that, but like if the people that have been traditionally silent would suddenly take a voice, and say "oh god maybe someone will oppose the things that I think are so stupid, and maybe I will too."

KENT: Do you think the majority of people that come to hardcore shows are good people, depending on the show obviously? I mean, between the Barn and the Country Club there's a vast difference.

BRENT: It's hard to say, I could ask myself the very same question about people that go to anything. It's hard to say who a good person is.

KENT: Okay, another way, do you think the people, the typical

hardcore person, do you think they are receptive to new ideas and are able to deal with them in a better way than the average person?

KEVIN: I'd like to think so.

BRENT: Yeah, I'd like to think so.

DAVE: I would say no. Case in point the Fugazi show, you get a band like Beat Happening that is doing something radically different, from the crowds point of view. They get up there and they get spit on, they get ashtrays thrown at them, I mean, at the Country Club I don't think you can get something radical and totally different and present it on stage.

KENT: Right, but I was thinking more in terms of ideas, personal action, and lifestyles, but definitely that is a true point too.

BRENT: It's hard to say, a lot of people that have been into hardcore have been into it for quite a long time and they're really used to what they're doing, and there has been this consensus among bands that being hardcore is enough, and I don't think it is at all. There is so much that you can do in your life to help other people and to make yourself a better person. Being hardcore is just being hardcore. Being in the hardcore scene is such a small thing, I mean it's worthwhile if you are genuinely trying to make it something good, but just being in it to be in a band or sing-a-long or to look the part really means nothing at all, and I don't think the person who's being in the scene for those reasons is any better than anyone else.

KENT: it seems to me like for all the criticism that the straight edge crowd might take it seems that they are somewhat receptive because they've already done something with their lives. It's a little bit different, they are capable and willing if some band came along that they really liked with ideas and opinions. Look at vegetarianism.

BRENT: But a lot of people would argue the other way though, I mean, just say that vegetarianism has expanded because it is a trend, and that they aren't capable for thinking for themselves. Maybe things are spread that way.

KENT: How do you determine the difference between a trend and a non-trend?

BRENT: It's totally subjective, no one can, it's whatever way you want to look at it. I think if you're not straight edge then it's a trend... (laughter)

KEVIN: It's a trend you'll grow out of.

KENT: Yeah, exactly. (laughter)



UCSB Old Gym, 3/10/90, photo McClard

The topic kind of died...

KENT: On a musical aspect, do you think that you have some originality?

BRENT: I don't know. I think we're getting there. It's hard to say, I mean our first stuff was crap. It really was.

KEVIN: I hear you.

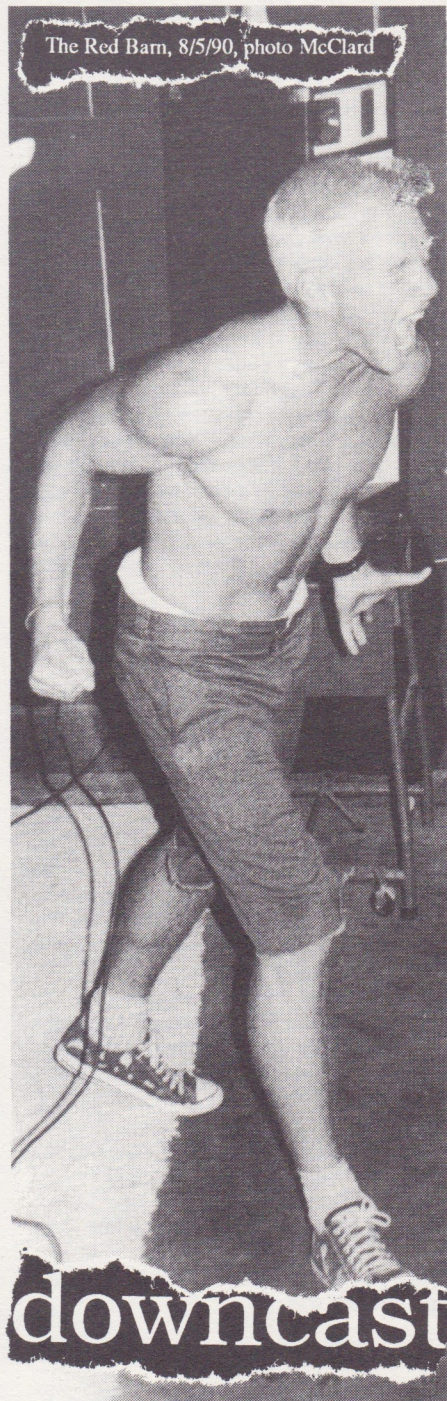
BRENT: I think it's getting better. There's obviously influences in it, and we all know them.

KEVIN: It's just a matter of time. Brent's modest, but excellent at trumpet, and he just now started playing guitar a year and a half ago, and with time he's going to get better, and the better he gets the different the music will be. He doesn't like to play what everyone else plays. He writes all our music so...

BRENT: I think the whole idea behind writing music is starting to change because honestly when we first started I didn't know what I wanted out of this band, and if we would have just done the whole O.C. thing and got popular that way I think originally I would have been happy, but now that totally revolts me. There's different ideas behind writing each song now, and I'm trying to get away from the stereotypical, the idea of me writing all of this angry music and writing it entirely the same style it's not really indicative of the person I am because I'm

not always angry. I think I'm more a quite person then anything else. So I've been thinking a lot of trying to put different parts of myself into the music instead of always this rage that, you know no one feels anger all the time, it's just that I feel it a lot. All you have to do is walk outside, but you don't feel it all the time, and for the music to express it all the time wouldn't really be fair to myself I don't think.

KENT: Before "Paradox" you always mention that it's this paradox to kill people because they've killed, why do you think that it is ineffective to kill people?



I mean I understand for you personally, your moral point of view, but why does it not work? **KEVIN:** Because it doesn't set an example of non-violence, it continues an example of violence. When someone kills someone it is a violent act, if the state, if the country actually wanted to deter those actions from occurring in the future they would not allow violence at all. They would say "We're not going to stand for violence, not even from our level. If you're going to kill someone and they find you guilty then you're going to be thrown in jail for the rest of your life. We're not even going to attempt the violent act." All it does is say that violence is acceptable but only in certain situations, but it is still saying that it is acceptable.

BRENT: The way capital punishment is set up right now, though, there are so few people that are actually executed that it's really not a feasible deterrence for people, and if we were living in the time of Ferdinand and Isabella and we have the inquisition going and a million people are dying every year then I think people would behave themselves because it would be a real threat, but as it is now we've got probably a 10 to 15 year stay on death row before you actually get killed if you ever get

killed. It's not really a feasible deterrent, and I'm not saying that the state should go the other way and start killing more people because that's obviously wrong, but from a logistical point of view it's just not working.

KENT: In "Force," there is obviously a vegetarian context, are there other connotations that you are shooting at?

BRENT: Yeah, I left the song ambiguous deliberately because I really think that life is what drives this planet and it is more important than political systems and it is more important than money and it is more important than material things, and what I mean by life is obviously animals, I mean you're right, we're all vegetarians, but I also mean it in a political sense that governments shouldn't have the right to exploit

people and they shouldn't have the right to kill people, and people in this country in particular should not support political parties that are killing people, not only the Republicans but the Democrats are doing it too. So I mean the song has a lot of different aspects to it, and I mean it only as a defense of life. In a sense I guess it's my own personal Hippocratic oath because I am planning to go to med school and it's what I want to do.

KENT: Is that the closest thing you have to a political song, I mean "Paradox" is actually a political song.

BRENT: I think the band as a whole, every single song if you had to sum it up would be about equality, and equality can be a political concept as well. In that sense I think every song is political, but I'm not trying to draw these really shady lines that yeah we're a political band. There are always connotations, and "Force" may be the most political song, but it's not as clear.

KENT: In terms of that song, where would you stand on abortion?

BRENT: Well, personally I feel that abortion is wrong, but I mean I would never ever support the government's right to limit anything, and that includes a woman's choice to control her own body, but I just think that it is totally ridiculous to think that a fetus is not alive because it is only a matter of weeks or months before it is an actual person. It always has the potential, and a little bit of time is just such an insignificant thing in determining what is a person.

KENT: You could take that back to the Catholic's point of view to just a little bit more time, and sperm is a potential.

BRENT: But sperm has no potential in and of itself.

KENT: True.

BRENT: It's pretty obvious. I mean I guess it does sound a little bit puritanical, but it's the way I feel. But I will always be pro-choice.

KENT: Do you think that you will ever write political songs?

DAVE: I'd like to. I'd like to, definitely.

KENT: Do you have any idea about what kind of things?

DAVE: I've started to do a lot more writing personally, I mean just on a personal level, I can't write music. I don't have the talent to do it, I've tried, I just don't think I can write music, so the only way for me to add to this band is to write and I know I can do it, I just haven't come up with anything.

KENT: Do you mean in terms of songs or other kinds of literature to pass out?

DAVE: Maybe both. Maybe both, I mean that's pretty far out to think that I can do that, but hopefully I can, but as for now, just lyrics. I'm just concentrating on a lot of lyrics right now. I started writing a lot about the nuclear issue. I've become interested in a group called The Big Mountain Support Group that deals with Indian rights in Arizona. I'm very interested in that. I'd really like to write more about that.

KENT: You were going to pass out some stuff at shows weren't you?

DAVE: Yeah, for the show up here I left it there because I came straight from work, for the show with V.D. at Spankey's I didn't do it just because of the whole...

BRENT: It seemed really inappropriate.

DAVE: Exactly, it seemed very inappropriate just from maybe meeting V.D., but I don't want to go much further into that... sorry.

BRENT: Now we're dead.

KENT: Me too, join the club.

KEVIN: "Kent McClard you fucker" (A V.D. quote).

KENT: Have you ever thought about passing out like lyrics and other kinds of things?

BRENT: Yeah, we have, I'd love to do it. I haven't, in recent months, been putting as much effort into the band as I should be, but I really would like to pass out literature. Even like more detailed explanations of each song, something like that.

DAVE: Which we are doing on the 7".

BRENT: There's so much more we could do with the band that we haven't been doing.

DAVE: We're still growing, I mean god. I don't know how long we've been together in this form, less than a year?

KEVIN: Right, we're just going to have to bring it to another level, and it's going to take time. I think we all plan on doing this for some time and I think with time we'll bring ourselves to higher levels.

BRENT: We need to push ourselves a little more, I mean push myself.

KEVIN: It's hard because you're working tons of hours a week, I'm working 30 hours a week, we're all going to school full time, I mean it's real difficult...

DAVE: We live two hours away.

KEVIN: It's difficult, but it's definitely something we plan on doing and I think will do. Dave's starting to pass out literature and stuff. I

think all of that stuff is going to happen. I don't think we'll ever be content with just getting called up on the phone and having people ask us if we want to play a show and then driving down and playing a show and then driving home. It's just not worth it. It's not what we all envision this band to be a vehicle for.

KENT: Why do you think that the majority of bands do envision that as the total goal?

KEVIN: Because they haven't experienced it.

KENT: But have you experienced that?

KEVIN: We've experienced playing shows, I mean you always set goals for yourself. At the beginning of this band our goal was to write some songs, and after that our goal was to play them well and after that to actually play a show and then to play another one, and after that one we kind of got stuck in this let's play show after show after show after show, and after that it was to play a benefit show and make some money for some people, and now it's, it's, we've done that, and we've played with big bands and people that we thought we're mystical who we're actually just business men, and I mean it's now time for us to push ourselves and expand as a band.

BRENT: I would rather, even though putting on those shows was frustrating and hellish, I would rather every single show we do be set up by ourselves and have it a little more socially responsible then just going down and playing Spanky's because there really is nothing to playing Spanky's. It's just, it's really a diversion. I could do anything on Saturday, I could go play football, honestly, driving down to Riverside and playing those shows... if there is no social merit then it's really worthless.

KEVIN: That's also why we need to expand on, if we are going to do things like that then we need to do things like Dave was talking about and pass out literature, and you know talking to people...

BRENT: We need to become a lot more uncompromising.

KEVIN: Definitely.

BRENT: Not asserting ourselves, but getting our points across because we haven't been doing it as well as we could be.

KEVIN: I think another microphone on stage for commentary from the band in between songs or possibly writing songs with two vocal inputs, which would be...

DAVE: We'll have to see what happens with that.

KEVIN: Yeah, we're thinking about it. So we'll see.

KENT: A lot of what you're talking about is trying to set up standards and not be compromising, do you think that will turn people away?

BRENT: It could.

KEVIN: Hopefully it won't.

DAVE: My personal view is who cares? I don't care.

BRENT: We have to do this for ourselves.

KEVIN: But you can take that view, and I've taken that view, and I probably still have that view right now, but then again if we can draw as many people that go to a Country Club show and not have a Country Club show price, and not have a Country Club atmosphere then we can actually reach all those people that are there. The more people that come to our shows, that we don't turn away, but still remain uncompromising then...

BRENT: We need to couple the two because part of doing it is being effective, and if you're not effective, if you're turning everyone away... true you're still doing it and it's good in a personal sense, but you're not doing anything for other people. You're not trying to change anything.

KEVIN: I had a big long talk with someone about that at our last show and I'm going to start putting a lot of thought into pre-show preparation and try to figure out how to approach certain subjects because we're so angry when we play that people may just be shutting that out and not wanting to have anything to do with it because we are just pushing the issue on them, which I want the issues to be presented, but I want it to be presented in a way where hopefully they can kick it around in their head, not where they are just going to shut it out and not have anything to do with it before they even hear what it's about.

KENT: What was the topic that was...

KEVIN: Just the fact that sometime I get angry and yell and don't really take the time to explain things thoroughly and things like that.

BRENT: I'd rather not be totally contrived up on stage, but I think it is important that the ideas get across and not just ranting and raving.

KENT: Why do you think the scene in general is fairly conservative, at least where we live?

BRENT: All the kids are coming from conservative backgrounds.

KENT: This is a boring question, let's not do it, oh go ahead...

BRENT: You can't say that there's been anyone that's been influential in the hardcore scene we're involved with. I mean there's like little sub-sects of hardcore. There's like the Media Children people who do a lot of things; set up benefit shows, and do a lot of picnics and free co-operative stuff, and then there's the O.C. hardcore thing, which we are more into it, and there has been no band in Southern California that has challenged the way that those kids have grown up, the way that I've grown up, the way we've all grown up. So they enter the scene and not seeing any resistance to that the whole conservative view is just acclimated into the scene, and I don't know, it's hard to say if that kind of view is everywhere.

KENT: It seems that it is symptomatic of the whole country for the last six years at least, or at least since the second Reagan term. Do you think that we will see any kind of swing to the left in the future?

BRENT: Yeah, I think we will, I mean we have to...

KEVIN: I think we have to, it's just getting too out of control.

BRENT: With insurance getting absolutely ridiculous and the majority of people in this country can't even get decent medical coverage because they can't afford insurance. People are going to start to question that eventually, I don't know why they haven't, but I think they definitely will. It will get to a point where so many people are getting screwed over that something is going to have to change, and it's not going to be anything radical in this country, it will just be four years going by and somebody will be elected and change will be implemented gradually.

KENT: Do you think our society can continue this way indefinitely?

BRENT: Western society?

KENT: Yeah.

BRENT: No. Eventually we'll kill ourselves if we keep going the way we are. It's inevitable.

DAVE: I agree.



Admiral is not merely a band. They are a journey through regret, agony, beauty, and ultimately triumph. In one word-genuine. With a depth, fervor, conscience, and charm seldom found in the flash-in-the-pan circuit of new band births, Admiral subtly slaps you with hardcore, humanity, and hope. - Sonia

ADMIRAL

SONIA: Did someone originally have this idea, this concept of Admiral, or did it develop with time?

MIKE: Well, yeah, I guess it was kind of me 'cause I was just tired of not doing anything. I wanted to be in a band you know. It's like my trip.

SONIA: Why are all of you doing this with your lives? Why do you have this band and what do you want to accomplish with Admiral?

MIKE: These are like the only guys

I can work with and it just fell together, especially with the line up we have now. This is it. There's no one else I can work with.

BILL: I just think it's a good mold of Pennsylvania musicians.

SONIA: So you're all real happy with the way things are going now?

SEAN: Yeah, for the most part. I don't know I suppose there could be better things I could be doing with my life as far as that aren't so time consuming and as far as the band goes right now it's very much so money consuming too, I bought a van and everything and I'm paying that off. And with just equipment that I rent you know for practicing

and just a lot of the p.r. we do, calling people and all the traveling we do, sometimes we don't get paid enough gas money.

JOSEPH: Punk rock.

SEAN: But you know, if I wasn't in Admiral I don't know what I would be doing. I mean I know I'd probably be pursuing different things...

MIKE: I'd be dead...

SEAN: But I don't know where my outlet of creativity would come from because it seems just like now when we get up on stage I just don't give a fuck anymore. I mean I care about the music but I don't give a fuck in the sense that this is it, this is our trip, and this is what I want to do so I just lose my mind and I know these guys do too.

SONIA: How do you feel when you guys are on stage playing live?

JOSEPH: Very hot, and wet, and strange. Backstreets, 7/22/90, photo Skindrud

SONIA: What does it do to you on stage when you are playing live?

MIKE: Exhaust me. I don't know. It just strikes all these emotions. Have you ever felt anything like it before?

BILL: Yeah I have. Hitting home runs in little league (*laughter all around*). I'm serious. It's the same feeling. It's like you just did something great and you get noticed for it and it's great. I mean, people come up, you know, when I used to hit the big home run in the big game for little league (*laughter round two*). You know how everybody would come up and say, "God that was great! I loved seeing you walk around the bases!" And we won the game and it was incredible, and let's go get some ice cream! Now this is the same thing. I go up on stage and people come up and say, "God that was incredible! You guys played great!" and people say, "Let's go get a beer!" And I have to say, "I'm sorry. I used to be in a straight edge band. I just don't..."

GARRETT(roadie): And what if you guys play like shit? Is it like striking out?

BILL: No playing like shit is probably like just me individually playing great but the team losing.

JOSEPH: We've felt very often that we played like shit but for some reason people argue with us.

MIKE: I know personally that I have totally high expectations for our performance.

SEAN: And we never live up to Mike's expectations. Never.

MIKE: Yeah, I have really high standards.

BILL: I think a lot of times we've sounded like shit and these guys don't agree with me.



SEAN: Being on stage is just like. . . 'cause I kind of feel like we're not just a bunch of guys who play music, we're like artists in a way. There's so much you can do. It seems like a lot of bands follow the club rules: they get up, they get on stage, they set up, they play their tunes, they jump around a little or the singer walks across the stage and says things in between songs and then they get off and that's it.

JOSEPH: And they go sit in the back.

SEAN: Yeah. And it's like you can do so much. I mean you could totally cut yourself open and bleed or draw on yourself or take paint and throw it on something. You can do all kinds of crazy things. And it's like that's what I'm trying to get at because the more and more we play out the more and more I feel less conscious. I don't care if people like us or not. I don't care whether they're watching us or not. I'm doing this because it's like, the whole thing of like the expressionism of it. This is what I can do and this is what I want to do. Like I wanted to bring a trash can to a show and a baseball bat but I couldn't find a trash can suitable enough. It's a really neat experience; like Bill said, it's the greatest natural high. 'Cause like people came up to us the other night in Separate Peace and cried.

BILL: Yeah, the whole thing about when we played in Rochester the other night, we got like great compliments. We made people cry with some of our songs which is really odd. But I just looked at it as we did okay. We did alright. It wasn't bad but it wasn't like great. It was a good show but I mean other people seemed to think it was better, I don't know.

MIKE: I think we gave it our all. We put every ounce, you know. . .

SEAN: Even when we practice. . .

BILL: With practice it's the same thing as a show. It's what we feel when we're playing a song. We don't like cheat anybody out of our feelings.

MIKE: I know, we don't play the songs. We feel them.

SEAN: It must've been a good show 'cause my knee's reswollen.

SONIA: Mike, you said you have a lot of high expectations every time you guys play. What do you expect?

MIKE: Well, I just like a good sound to go along with it.

SONIA: Do you guys have a concept of what you're trying to get people to understand or some sort of an achievement you're after or is it all just spontaneous?

MIKE: Well, it is spontaneous but I'd like everybody to feel it you know. I'd just like to see everyone just pounding their. . .

JOSEPH: Doing whatever they want. Having a good time, not feeling like they have to do something. Many times before when we've played and maybe it's a wrong thing to do, I've always suggested to people to do what they want to do, move around, whatever. I don't know if it comes across as telling them what to do. I mean if they want to stand there that's fine, I just don't want them to feel like they have to do something or because they're female they have to stand in the back. 'Cause that happened at a show we played in Washington state, all the male people in the building we're up front and they were fighting and purposely knocking each other over and all the females we're just sitting in the back, way back, not even like standing close. And I said if you just want to come up you don't have to come in the center, put yourself in the target to get hurt or anything, you know, but if you don't feel like sitting down... We've played shows where the people have gone completely nuts, jumped all over the place and had a good time and we've still got the same reaction when we get off the stage like everything was great and stuff like that. And then people just stand in front of us, just stand and watch us, and we get the same reaction when we get off. I mean it does help a little bit if they jump around and have a good time. But it's still not going to hinder our performance. You can just do whatever you want when you watch us.

SEAN: One thing I try to get across is that there are certain songs that we do that I feel a lot of pain during. I mean it's so much pain that I want to like. . . I don't know what I want to do but I feel a lot of pain. And I want to project that we mean this. It's not something we're doing because it's making us money and it's not something we're doing because we want to get popular. It's something we're doing because it's just there. A lot of times it's how I feel about the world.

BILL: That's one of the reasons I wanted to use that guy for the cover of our seven inch, because he looked like he represented a lot of pain and agony and a lot of hardship.

SEAN: But on the same side he looked hopeful too.

JOSEPH: Yeah, I thought he looked free.

BILL: But he's gone through a hell of a lot of shit.

SEAN: Yet he can still stand to fall. When I look at the E.P. now I think that was a really good choice for the cover because it represents

like, what Bill said, the pain and the desperation and yet his hands are raised to hope.

BILL: We're not a band that's about pain and hatred and things like that. We're more or less a positive band but we have a lot of feelings that could go either positive or negative. That's reality.

We're a reality band!

SONIA: How do you feel about audience participation and slamming and stage diving?

MIKE: Well one thing I hate to see is people just totally slamming and jumping on stage and not even caring about listening to the lyrics and just using the music as a backdrop to their aggression.

SEAN: I think it's fun when people dance.

MIKE: If they're feeling it you know.

JOSEPH: I don't think it's an aggression thing. I just think they feel like they have to do it. People always say, "I'm getting out my aggression," but I think they think they have to do that and I'd rather they do whatever they want.

SEAN: I remember reading this quote that said like, "Punk was a form of middle class white aggression that was under the gun from authority and their parents and school and everything" and I read these quotes from people that went to shows because they

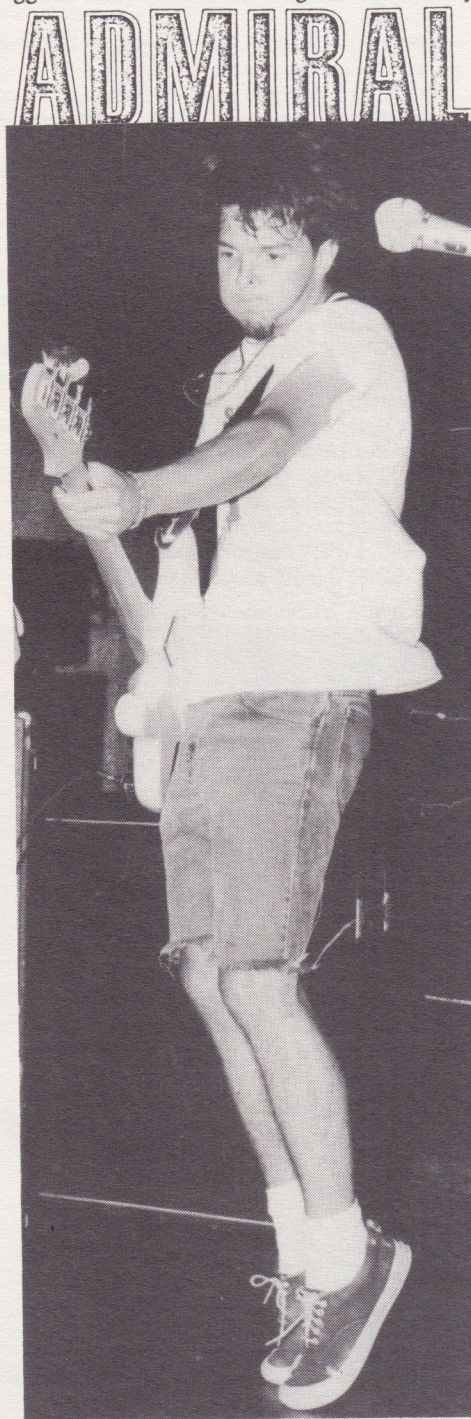
wanted to just get into a fight and they just wanted to forget about the world for awhile, just slam and stuff.

And now it seems like there's no need for that anymore.

Some places we play people will just dance which is totally great and they'll just stand there in their own little world and dance to the music and that's the kind of person that I kind of like playing to more, that's going to appreciate it for their own sense because that's an individual to me. But these guys that run around in the circle dance and punch each other and give each other black eyes, I mean, I really don't enjoy that.

BILL: When I'm trying to watch a band and you can't watch the band play for a minute without looking to your side to see if you're going to get nailed.

MIKE: Well you can explode and go nuts just standing there you know. You don't have to hurt anybody. I mean I just stand there when I'm watching a band



Backstreets, 7/22/90, photo Skindrud

that inspires me, you know. I won't move more than like five steps.

SEAN: People went to shows when they were younger or when they first start out and they see all these guys running around in a circle, punching each other and stuff, and they think fuck that's great and they get out there and do the same thing and then the next generation of punks that comes along, they see the same thing and yet you don't see too many people out there having a good time. 'Cause I've actually been to shows where I was watching some favorite bands of mine and just dance and I actually got assaulted because I was dancing and not slamming.

JOSEPH: I just wanted to say about people participating or just standing there, whenever I'm playing if I see someone just standing there for some reason it makes me feel kind of self conscious, just staring at me or us. I'd rather be on the same floor as people, playing basement type things or whatever. Just being on stage feels separate, you feel like people are looking up. That's why I'd rather they not be looking, they just move around or whatever and have their eyes closed.

MIKE: Well, I like to have their attention, not staring at you but. . .

SEAN: The last time someone stage dived when we were on tour I totally got kicked in the face by a real combat boot and that just didn't feel good.

JOSEPH: It doesn't look like people like it either. I know I don't like it when people are jumping on my head.

MIKE: It's also just a small percentage of people who do it.

JOSEPH: It also seems like the people who do it, they do it, they run around, and they do it again.

SEAN: And then you're playing and sometimes you're like perfect waist level to their arm and they can easily come up and hit you in the crotch or in the stomach or something. And to me that just doesn't make me feel safe. When we played in Longview there was this really big guy and at first he was really slamming and stuff and then when we started playing he actually like stopped and was being cool and telling people to like slow down and stuff and maybe something happened with that guy that he realized it wasn't the scene for him.

SONIA: So do you think it's not really appropriate for the newer generation just getting into punk now to experience that rush? I mean I don't know how you behaved at fifteen but a common argument asks, "Should a kid today know better?"

MIKE: I don't want to sound like we're totally against it. I don't like the way Fugazi preaches against slamming, don't stage dive and stuff.

SEAN: It's what you want to do. You paid to get in.

MIKE: I don't like to see people get hurt, you know.

JOSEPH: I think people should just be more careful about it.

SEAN: Take a look at who's

beside you. When do your rights end and someone else's begin? For awhile I wouldn't go to shows because I pay money to go in here and get brutalized. And even though I'm not a small person, I mean I can imagine someone who's 5'4" or a younger kid or a younger girl gets hurt in the pit and it's just like depressing.

MIKE: Stage diving and slamming can be fun.

SEAN: You paid to get into the show. I don't care what you do as long as you don't really infringe on me. People are going to do it no matter what. There's certain types of music that it goes to I think, there's certain types of music that attract that thrash crowd but there are certain types of music that to me don't warrant that anymore. I think it's kind of redundant because they're like running around in circles and they're getting nowhere.

MIKE: But it's got to be expected. I mean we play that style of music. We play music that makes people react like that.

JOSEPH: Actually, I took part in circle dancing not too long ago and I had a lot of fun 'cause everybody was having fun, nobody was punching each other. I was just standing on the side and putting my hand out and people were slapping my hand and everybody had a smile on their face. This was in South Dakota. Then somebody grabbed me and pulled me in and nobody was being vicious about it. Everyone was just having a fun time.

SEAN: When Dead Silence played, before they went on, Green Day played and they were just like, "We don't think Admiral's punk because we didn't see them out in the pit!" So Joe and I just both looked at each other and did the total circle dance and all I did was like just grab people and circle dance with them and that was kind of fun but I can really see where in a scene that isn't fun how people are just turned. . . I mean I might even be turned off by that.

MIKE: When everybody's smiling it's cool.

SEAN: Yeah, I don't care if they're going in a figure eight or whatever.

BILL: Some girl asked me if I wanted to dance and I didn't even know she meant circle dance. She grabbed me by the arm and took me around the circle a couple times. It was great. She was the first girl I've ever like slam danced with.

SEAN: Rapid City, South Dakota was like. . . I mean you'd think there was... we pull in and we're like, "Oh my god, South Dakota." And when we got to the show the kids were so friendly and they were young and they were so energetic and the guys we stayed with were the best hosts and it just gave me so much hope because here they are, there's no skinhead trouble, there's no violence at shows, no one hates each other. Maybe it's a young scene and it hasn't gone through that yet but I really hope it stays that way because it was just such an inspiration. It

was fun playing to those people.

SONIA: How was your tour overall in retrospect?

MIKE: It was the best.

JOSEPH: I wish I was there right now.

SEAN: As soon as Mike got the pictures back it made us want to be there again.

MIKE: We organized it ourselves, which is the way you should do it, and we went into it knowing that we we're a small band, an unheard of band, and we booked it with that in mind and we just didn't have high expectations. I think a lot of bands that go on tour have these high expectations that there will be a lot of people and it just went a lot better than I thought it would go.

BILL: The only place that was a real disappointment was Arizona which was odd.

SEAN: Well we came through Texas and then the show was cancelled in Arizona and like twenty people showed up and then New Mexico was cancelled.

MIKE: Yeah, we had a couple cancellations but we met so many cool people.

BILL: There were a lot of high points on the tour but there were a couple lows.

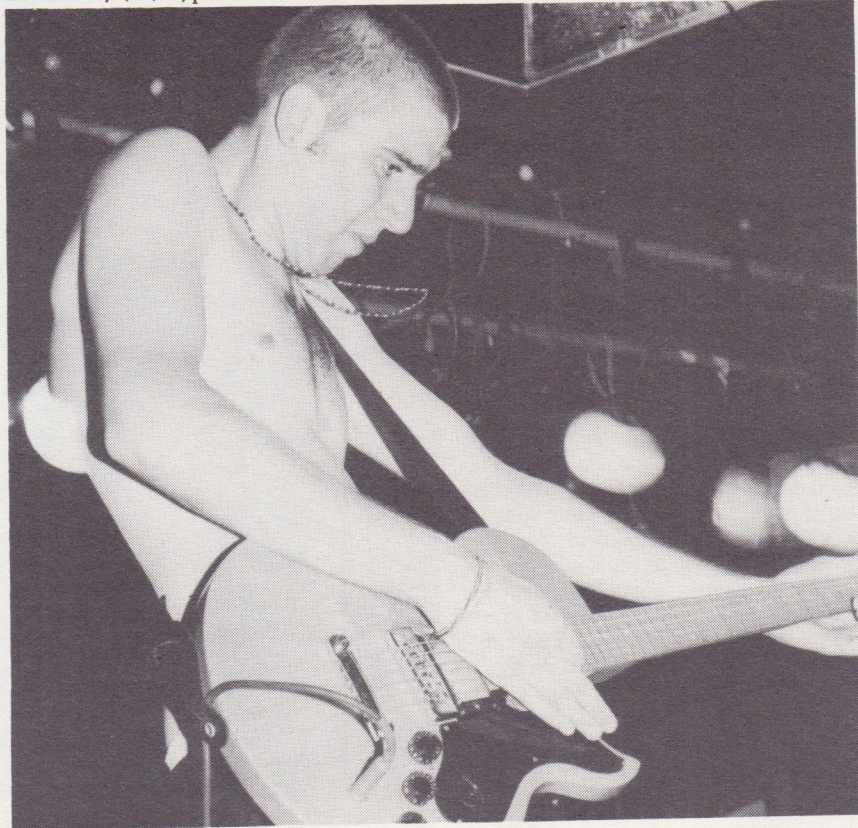
JOSEPH: Being with Separate Peace made the tour. I wouldn't have wanted to tour with anybody else. We were like one band.

SEAN: It was like a big happy family.

BILL: We interchanged, some nights they would go on last and some nights we would go on last. It wasn't like a competition thing where they were always opening for us or vice versa.

JOSEPH: It was equal everything as far as we did it.

BILL: Yeah, we split the pay fifty fifty.



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JOSEPH: Stayed in the same places.

SEAN: Shit in the same toilets.

JOSEPH: Touched each other in places. . .

MIKE: We were one band.

MIKE: And we're going to do it again next summer.

SONIA: Nationwide or Europe?

MIKE: Well we want to do both, remember?

BILL: We're just touring the southern tip of Florida.

SONIA: Did you have any personal guidelines you went by when you booked the tour?

BILL: Only over twenty-one.

MIKE: We'd only play all ages and for door price, we wanted like five dollars or less and most of the shows were like three or four.

SEAN: Except Oxnard was \$6.50 and they said that was average for there which we were happy with because there are certain economic factors.

MIKE: I talked to some people and they were like, "How can you do that you're an unheard of band." Hey, if we find a place to play that won't meet our standards we just won't play.

JOSEPH: We don't play, we drive.

MIKE: Considering that we didn't have a record out when we left, we got our records on tour, I think it was just a complete success story.

We didn't really lose money. We didn't have band problems, I mean we had like minor band problems. . .

JOSEPH: Were you on the same tour?

SEAN: Mike was not on tour with us.

JOSEPH: The van squeaked from Virginia to. . .

SONIA: What were your impressions of the state of punk rock across the nation, at this point in 1990?

JOSEPH: There were a lot of places out there that were nothing like here. I don't feel like we have a lot here as far as a lot of people who stick together with each other. Most of the places we've played were like large groups of people who liked each other, and got along with each other. It was really fun to be there with them.

SONIA: So you aren't very disillusioned with the scene right now?

BILL: I thought Berkeley was great!

MIKE: If anything I'm disillusioned with this area. I thought everywhere else was a lot better. I really would rather not talk about it. I think it's sad that I have to say this but I don't want to connect myself with this scene. I'd rather consider ourselves a band from the world. We're not from Harrisburg.

SEAN: I'd like to say that I feel we work real hard at what we do and for a long time we did a lot of things for the scene. We were like the only people who would really try to put on shows and get different bands, like Mike would be the only guy who would get different bands. . . and people were just not into it. And the older scenesters would just say, "Oh if it's not Jane's Addiction or Fugazi" or something they wouldn't come. It's like you just get tired of it.

JOSEPH: Well people around here, some people want to do stuff, but it just seems like for the wrong reasons, not for everybody but just for themselves.

SONIA: How do you feel about the rise in Krishna consciousness?

MIKE: It's interesting. I mean, I'm very interested in Eastern philosophy and have been for a long time but the Krishna thing is crooked and trendy.

SEAN: It's like fascism, it's like nazi skinhead-ism, or even just skinhead in general. It engulfs them up in it. Skinhead isn't that bad but the nazi skinhead is. It just takes young impressionable minds and..

JOSEPH: It lies to them.

SEAN: Krishna-ism targets young impressionable minds like some other youth groups and it warps them into believing that it's the only way to go, and I'm just not into that. And how it's invaded it and set new standards on how a band's integrity is.

SONIA: How has the female turn out been at your shows?

JOSEPH: Some of them were really good. Longview, Washington is the one that stuck out. I mean there were females there but they weren't part of the whole thing.

BILL: South Dakota was the best female scene. Rapid City and Sioux Falls—girls were dancing, it was about a fifty fifty scene there, about fifty percent males fifty percent women which is the best scene that could possibly be. South Dakota in general was the best state we played. The girls were great, and so were the guys, I mean we're not shorting anybody.

JOSEPH: I remember in Little Rock, Arkansas, there was a particular girl dancing. She was the hardest... I mean, she wasn't punching people or anything, but she was just going nuts, moving her head

around and that was to the first band that played and all three bands she was just going nuts. That doesn't really happen a lot around here.

SONIA: Is there something you'd like to see happening in the scene right now?

SEAN: Yeah, when we played Memphis, Tennessee, I'd like to see this stop. We had about twenty kids come up to us and ask us were we vegans or vegetarians, how did we feel about straight edge, and whether or not we were a political band. And I felt like if I didn't give the right answer they would go away. Like they came up to us:

"Are you vegetarians?"—

"Yeah." "How do you feel about hardline straight edge?"—"It sucks." "Are you guys

political at all?"—"Well kinda." "Okay we'll come see you then." And I

felt like if I said, "No, I eat steak. And no I'm not political. And I think hardline

straight edge is okay, you know, I don't care what they do," that they wouldn't

have come seen us. And a couple people I heard wouldn't come

see us like the guys in Raid wouldn't come see us because

we weren't politically correct and we weren't all vegans. I

want to see that stop, I really do.

JOSEPH: What I want to see start more is people like you two putting together

(Exedra)... I can't believe you said to me you

threw together this thing before you left and then I read the whole thing, which is rare for me to do as far as like things that you call

'zines. I read that whole thing straight through and it was just really inspiring and gave me a really good feeling. That's what I'd like to see, stuff like that.

MIKE: I love to see people totally doing stuff that benefits more than just them, like the whole Blacklist thing, I'm totally into that. I can't stand all these new labels that are putting out these seven inches and selling them for \$3.50, \$4.00.

SEAN: You can do it for three.

MIKE: I totally respect anybody who's doing punk rock with integrity you know. On our tour we met a lot of people who are, and that feel the same way we do, like Green Day, Econochrist. I'd love to sit there and list all the people 'cause I totally have the utmost respect for them.

I think it's people like that that make me so happy to be into punk rock.

SEAN: Like Fletcher in Memphis, Tennessee. In his home I felt like I was home. I shared some stuff with him, and he shared some stuff with us about feelings.

JOSEPH: And that's what he does. Every hardcore oriented band that plays at the Antenna club he puts them up, sets it up and does the



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booking.

MIKE: And he doesn't get anything out of it, just for the love of punk rock, hardcore.

SEAN: Really when I think about it, he's just like so unselfish.

SEAN: As far as like the people I met it gave me a lot of inspiration because when I came back I realized that so many people did things for me that the only way I could possibly repay the kindness they gave was doing what they did for us. Give them any amount of food I have no matter what. Just help them out because if it hadn't been for people helping us out we wouldn't have made it. I'll give anything that I have you know because it's what people did for me and it makes me feel good too.

BILL: We were generous with our shirts and our records too. People that helped us out, we just said, "Here's a t-shirt." Especially that one lady in Longview, Washington that put on the show. This lady's like forty years old, she's got cancer and she's putting on hardcore shows. And that's just like the greatest thing. She was talking about how she was displeased with All when they came through on their tour and they totally didn't treat her well at all. And at the end of the night we gave her a shirt just to say thanks a lot 'cause you put on this great show and we loved it. And she was like, "Oh my god thank you so much! I can't believe you gave me a shirt!"

MIKE: And we felt bad you know 'cause you wish there was more you could do. I just feel like totally in debt to anyone who ever has helped us.

SEAN: She gave us \$75 which is a lot and then she said, "I wanted to pay you twice that much." And we're just like, "No way."

BILL: At the time that was the most we had gotten paid. I was like hitting the floor. She's like, "Is \$75 enough?" It was godhead!

JOSEPH: We played with Econochrist and they gave us \$20 out of what they got paid 'cause they were from the area and we were moving on and they gave us some of their money.

SONIA: Are you really happy with your seven inch and the label?

ADMIRAL: Yeah.

SONIA: Did you think about doing your own label?

MIKE: I'd really like to. I'd rather put out our own stuff but for financial reasons...

SEAN: We're just totally poor.

BILL: I don't hate the idea of putting out our own record but the advantages of being on a label, it seems like these days it's a good thing 'cause it's hard getting distributed and it's so hard to press it and the money and everything. Just being on a label that has records that have been put out before that are somewhat notable, it just helps a lot.

MIKE: Also, I communicated a lot with Jeff before we did it. He shares a lot of the same views.

BILL: Even though Jeff's a geek.

MIKE: But then again, we are. He's less of a geek.

SEAN: We'll record for the album and do that for Soul Force. Garrett's started up a label with Tom, Jay, and John (*Significant Records*) and I want to put out what they want to do and I'd like to do a single with them too if we could maybe, if they're ever able to, just to help them out. And I wouldn't mind doing a single of our own.

SONIA: Your lyrics seem semi-obscure. Enough so that there are a lot of levels of meaning that you can interpret from them. It's been

brought to my attention that "Horns Lay Silent" is a song about the abuse of animals, or vegetarianism. How do you come to write your songs? Where do you find your inspiration?

SEAN: I always try to write something that I don't feel is going to be straightforward enough to offend you or offend anybody in the band who may not believe what I believe. I do it in a way where it makes you think yet it's subtle enough to slap you a little. I like to write because I feel it may be one thing I can do and it may be one way I can communicate. "Horns Lay Silent" is about several things: it's about the abuse of animals but it's also about the line "I can see what I touch" and that's basically you could walk into a store and see this prepackaged chicken. Do you really know what a chicken looks like, or do you really know what veal looks like? And "I can see what I touch" is just about seeing these happy looking products but what really are they? A couple of the other lines are "questioning my abilities/my abilities to care/with dimes in pockets/and lies on tongues/questioning my abilities to love and care." I think about people who want my money and they're lying to me and they're saying give me your money because this is the thing I want you to buy and I'm saying you're questioning my abilities to love and care and they're saying this is good for you, you know. You should do this, you should do that. So it's not only about the abuse of animals; it's about the lies that go along with all that.

BILL: The best thing about the lyrics is that you can interpret them any way you want. We all have our own interpretation of our lyrics. Sean writes with such a vague greatness. That is, you can put your own mentality into these words and read them and you get out from them whatever you want. If you get pain and hatred out of it then that's fine. That's your emotion, whatever. If you get animal liberation out of it, if you get a song about the homeless, or illiteracy, you know that's fine. It's your trip. You look at it the way you want to.

MIKE: For example, one thing I've read out of "Horns Lay Silent" is like on a broader sense of what Sean was saying

about the chicken or whatever, just people not having any voice, you know, their horns laying silent and just like these prepackaged people with no voice. I just think Sean's songs have different levels you can take them on.

SEAN: Also the song "Comes From Nowhere" is probably one of the most blunt songs I've ever written. The line "He is limbless and he comes from nowhere" is talking about that too, about people who don't know what's going on, they don't know where they're from and they don't know their culture.

BILL: One time when I was reading "Horns Lay Silent" I was thinking about horns. Now you could think about a brass horn or you could think of sprouting horns from your head and I was thinking about these two rams. If you've ever gone up to Colorado you see rams butting heads like hell. And I pictured "Horns Lay Silent" almost like we've stopped butting heads. Our horns are laying silent.

JOSEPH: That's weird 'cause I always looked at it as horns like that but I pictured a cow not being able... his horns lay silent because you kill that animal and there's nothing he can say verbally about it, he just puts down his head. I mean they have to feel pain, you know, they have nerves and all that. But there's nothing they can say. They can make noise but they can't say, "Stop." And we chow down while horns lay silent. You go and you kill me and eat me and I can't say anything about it.

BILL: When I first joined this band I couldn't make out half the titles of the songs or anything like that. I couldn't understand why this was



named this and the first couple of weeks I asked Sean what's this song about and finally I got all the songs in my head but it was really difficult for the first couple weeks 'cause they'd be going like okay we're going to do "Blindfoldeats." That's the name of the song "Blindfoldeats." That's not two different words that's one word put together. Now what the fuck is that? We have a song called "Slowco Bustola." What the fuck is that?

SONIA: What are some of your newer songs about?

BILL: What's "Slowco Bustola" about?

SEAN: "Slowco Bustola" should have been called "Surrounded Yet Alone." But "Slowco Bustola" sort of fit it. It's about being surrounded yet you feel alone. The one line is "rusting without you" and I feel like I'm getting older as far as maturity-wise from a lot of people my age, from a lot of people I work with, a lot of people I meet. I feel like I'm a lot older than them and not by choice just because of maturity level. And the line "and I realize I'm surrounded yet alone" and there's not too many people that are actually giving a shit and they're twenty years old and it's like, "Fuck, I'm ready to turn twenty one and I'm ready to do this and that" and they really don't give a shit and I just feel like my worldly interests have broadened beyond partying, chicks, and fast cars. Also on the E.P., "Brother Can You Spare A Dime" is about being homeless and about not being able to read and write and about letting people know who this person is. "Brother Can You Spare A Dime" is not about begging; it's about help. "Seasonal" was about a conversation between me and Mike. It originally started out we were talking about how seasonal people are and how seasonal we are and how seasonal a lot of things are. I remembered back in this conversation before I left for drug rehab. The first verse of the song is about what it was like before and the second verse is about kind of what's going on now. Those are the last words he said to me. He said, "The seasons of my life will change." That's kind of about that period of my life where I felt like I came out of myself. Also, there was this song called "Seasons" and I figured this was a progression and now it's called "Seasonal." Newer songs? "Shells on Shelves" is about people who... when I think of "Shells on Shelves" I think of like some greedy businessman or woman who wants to get to the top and all they're doing is shoving other people aside, shoving their family's feelings aside, and people who are just shoving other people's feelings out of the way. And I don't want to see that happen in anyone's life because it just seems like it's such a shame, it's such a selfish thing. So the song "Shells on Shelves" is a song that I feel really deep down inside because I see people totally racing to get this American Dream which is just backed by greed and money. And they're totally running forward saying this is all I want out of my life and the kids that run off to college thinking, chasing this American Dream which has been dead since the 1700's.

MIKE: The American Dream died before America was born.

JOSEPH: It was stillborn.

SEAN: It's a song of desperation. Stop putting shells on shelves. It's like these empty shells of people who you've discarded and walked on by and you put them up on your little shelves like trophies. When we wrote that song Tara and I got into a fight about how I should sing it. She really helped me out as far as where I should sing stuff in that song; she helped me with the rhythm in that song. And "Wait," Bill wrote the song and it was called "Tight Ribbon" and it was about...

BILL: It was about people at my school which I just graduated from who couldn't exactly accept me for what I was. They thought I was some weirdo kid that never talked to anybody and just didn't hang out you know. The high school that I graduated from is a big drinking high school. It's like one of the biggest drinking high schools known around this area, in the world.

MIKE: It had water fountains at every other bathroom.

BILL: I mean drinking alcohol.

ADMIRAL: Oh.

BILL: I'm not particularly into that too much. I just really wrote the song about peoples' attitudes toward me and how they really never took the time to know me but by the way I look and by the way I act they could just tell you know that I was just some hateful kid that just didn't give a shit. So I just wrote the song about basically my high school buddies.

SEAN: And I sort of changed it into... I think I used maybe five or six words out of Bill's song but it was around that whole idea of...

BILL: You used a lot of concepts.

SEAN: Yeah, like the first line is "craving for an understanding/my head steams with hatred/the portrait is hung crooked from a black wall and it stings as it falls."

JOSEPH: Yeah, I love it! Poetry! He'll write a song and he'll call me up like five minutes after he finished and he'll read it to me and I'll love it.

MIKE: They're just so non-cliche and they're poetic. It's artistic you know, there's a lot of thought involved and a lot of feeling.

SEAN: It doesn't take me long to write lyrics because I know when I'm trying to write a song it doesn't happen. If I'm trying to write poetry it doesn't happen, like the poetry I wrote for you two the other day I don't know if it was the best thing I ever wrote or the worst or whatever I don't care it's just what was on my mind at the time and it clicked out in the form of a poem or two. I know if I'm sitting there trying to write a song I can never do it. It's like I'll be sitting here doodling or something and all of a sudden I'll say to Tara, "Do you know where my lyric folder is?" And I'll go get it and I'll write and I know when it's going to be a good song within about five minutes later, I'm done and I'm reading it back to myself.

SONIA: Admiral I would assume gets pegged as an emocore band and gets associated with D.C. quite a bit. How do you respond to that reference?

JOSEPH: I love it.

MIKE: It's true. I think any band that does not play with emotion sucks. We are definitely an emotional band. Bands are boring if they don't play with emotion.

BILL: But I hate being pegged as a D.C. band because that's really not us. We're not from D.C.

MIKE: No D.C. bands sound the same for one thing. Just the whole emo thing, yeah we're an emotional band... any band that does not play with emotion whether it be anger, whatever emotion it is, you know, love, sorrow, fear, whatever. If they don't play with that emotion they might as well be Debbi Gibson.

BILL: We're two and a half hours outside of Washington, D.C.

We're not on Dischord records. We're not a D.C. band.

MIKE: We listen to a lot of that stuff.

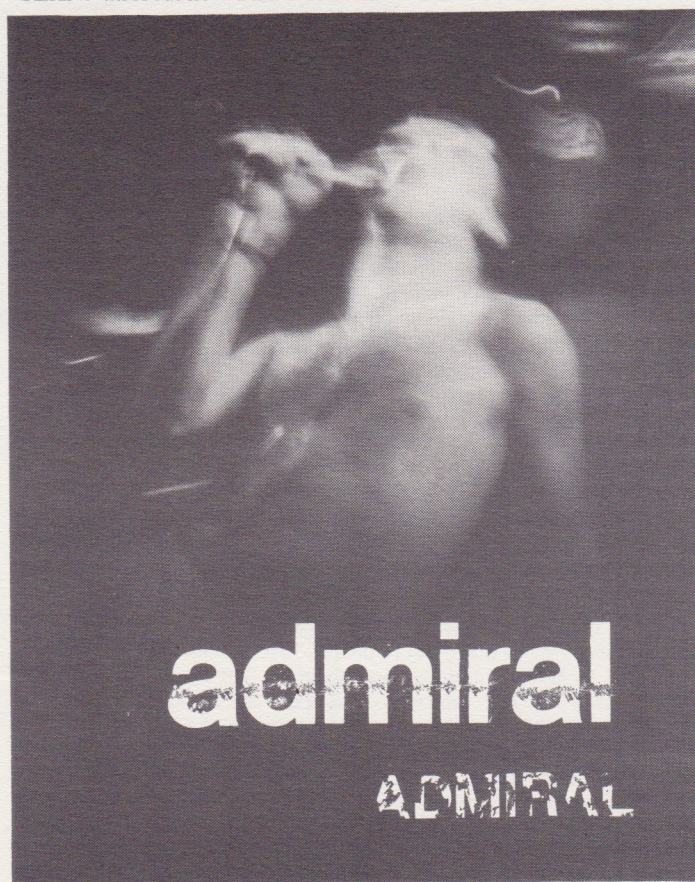
SEAN: We recorded in a D.C. "clique" studio basically but that's because we heard good stuff come out of there so we figured why not it's a good studio.

BILL: They've got a good thing so why not use it.

SEAN: Why should it just be something that's "elitist" or something?

BILL: Plus there's no good studios around here that know anything...

SEAN: ...About how a hardcore band wants to sound.



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BILL: They knew what we wanted.

SEAN: When we worked with Eli it just clicked. But I mean we've gotten shit, called emo-fags.

MIKE: You know how Superman has the "S," well I put an "E" on my bass.

SEAN: I know sometimes people might say, "Oh you guys sound a lot like this D.C. band." And I always dispute it because I'll admit some of my influences are from D.C. but for the most part I don't listen to a lot of D.C. music that much anymore. I listen to a lot of whatever I have. Like Bill said, my selection of tapes was boring on the way out. I listen to like Joe Strummer and whatever is available for me to listen to.

BILL: I listen to Danzig.

MIKE: I have a very diverse taste. I like D.C. stuff, straight edge stuff...

SEAN: If someone wants to peg us as being a D.C. band they really didn't give a lot of thought to our music because it's so much easier to say, "Oh, you guys sound like this" or "Oh, you guys are trying to sound like you're this" and they really didn't give us any thought if they're saying we sound like someone.

MIKE: We sound like Admiral.

GARRETT: If someone says you have a D.C. sound I don't think it's in any way derogatory. If anything, they think they're probably giving you a great compliment.

BILL: We caught a little bit of shit from the people at Gilman St. For one thing they put that we were from Washington, D.C. And it's like totally not true. And then when we got on the stage they introduced us as "the new Dischord band from Washington, D.C." and to me it was a little bit funny but not completely funny. I got a little chuckle out of it but it wasn't a big laugh, you know.

MIKE: There's no comparison to us and the new stuff Dischord is putting out. I think we're a lot harder.

SONIA: So what do you think is the most urgent concern facing humanity right now? Bring to mind the most painful thing you'd like to change.

JOSEPH: The other day, this is a very specific incident, Garrett, Amy, and I were in a car together. And when we're usually travelling anywhere we usually say hi to people. We honk the horn and wave. And it's not trying to make fun of people, "Hello fella!" or something like that. I looked at a guy who was about ten feet away and I honked the horn and said, "Hi!" and he looked at me and he reached and looked right in my eye and gave me the finger, and I like looked at Amy, and like Garrett couldn't believe he did that and I looked back at him and he's like, "Do you want to get out of the car?" And I was like, "No. I just wanted to say hi to you." And he just like mumbled and kept on walking. And it's stuff like that, people not being nice to each other, just in everyday things. You know I work in a retail store and I say hi to people. I mean sometimes I'm in a bad mood too and I'm sure I come across mean to other people and I don't say hi to them when

they come up to the register or something like that. You know I say hi to people and their only concern is to get out of that store, to throw their money at me and just get out. Like you're in a rush and it's my fault. And it's just stuff like that, people not being nice to each other. Any people, you know. I think there's too many people. I don't know if that has anything to do with it.

MIKE: I don't know where to start. I think there's just so much. I think the most urgent thing is entire humanity. I mean it's ridiculous like the environment, I just think it all links together.

There's no one thing 'cause it all affects the other thing.

SEAN: It's a never ending cycle. I remember my parents telling me about the sixties, that kids were saying, "Oh, I don't give a fuck about tomorrow because they're going to drop an A-bomb on us." And when I was growing up in the seventies, when I was in high school it was like, "I don't give a fuck if the world's going to end." And compared to what I heard about the sixties, and read about it, through my parents and other people, now the world coming to an end violently is so much more vivid. I mean even though the Soviet Union has started to come around as far as like being more friendly and a lot of other countries have, it seems like the United States of America is totally gearing up for war. Like about the war in Panama and everything that's going on in Central and South America and how much we're lied to about... they're now digging up peoples' graves in Panama, mass graves, and finding thousands upon thousands of Panamanian citizens. And they're saying that the Panamanian people down there are saying that the U.S. people were using lazars on people and trying out new chemical warfare and stuff. And they went down there for like fucking stomping ground parade shit, fucking killing people to find out what their new pieces of technology can do. This is one of the things that really concerns me. I live in a country where if I were to go outside this country into a country that this country is fucking with, I am associated with that bullshit. And I am lied to daily through the media, through news, through my local government, through my national government. And I just think that it's so corrupt, it's so immoral. I mean the moral majority, Tipper Gore, talk about how moral they are and they're not. And people are telling me what my American values should be. It's like who the fuck are you to tell me what my values are? I am supposed to have my own values and you are supposed to have yours. That's what makes us different. And they want us to have this all-the-same moral America. You shouldn't have an abortion. You shouldn't do drugs. You shouldn't do this. This is wrong. This is right. When you're telling me that, I think it's sick... it's to the point now where one of my greatest concerns is that the American people are just getting eaten alive by all this bullshit, and believing in our country. People that believe in this country overbearingly without questioning. The way you learn knowledge is to question. They teach you that in school: question. They teach you that in college: question knowledge, it's the only way you'll learn. If someone just tells you black is black and white is white you're going to believe that. But I think you should say, "Why is black black, and why is white white?" And why is our government running around

killing people and not saying anything to us? And why are all these covert actions happening? I just think that if more people stopped bitching and moaning and did something. If more people stopped saying, "Oh well, I'm for animal rights but I don't have anything to say about the environment, or abortion or anything." It's like no, go for it all man, have a fucking opinion and make it known. Everything's intermeshed. We're being lied to and we're swallowing it like good children. We have to find out the truth because I think when we finally do find out the truth I think a lot of people are going to be pissed off. We always say the truth will set you free but it'll piss you off first.

BILL: I don't know what to believe anymore.



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It feels so real, and so intense, and so inspiring. They may well sound like Fugazi, Rites of Spring, Soul Side... or whatever, but the emotion and intent is for real. How can we know? Because self-doubt is self-assuring. Fuel is striving for honesty, sincerity, and integrity. Shouldn't we all? - Kent

KENT: I think you guys are going to run into the criticism of being a D.C. rip-off or a Fugazi theft. What would be your reaction to that?

JIM: That's straight to the point.

AARON: Well, I can definitely see how some people might react that way, and I even react that way a little bit. It's hard not to be influenced by a band you really admire and feel strongly about, but I think the main thing is just in time, as we play together more, we will develop something uniquely our own.

normal and do things to open up the gateways for a lot of other bands that sound different. It's really cool, I think they've definitely, probably made a lot more people a lot more receptive to a lot of different things. I think that has been helpful for us, but at the same time I don't necessarily think that people say "I like Fugazi, I like these guys..." At least I would like to hope they don't think that.

JIM: To still answer that question, I think it is kind of cynical to say that there is... that it's like the new phase, the new fad or whatever, like rap is popular now... I like to think that the quality of the music and what they put out in the lyrics is contributing to what their popularity is. That scene is getting some attention, but I think it is well deserved. I don't think it's like a fad.

KENT: The thing I think is going to happen really soon is that we're going to see a lot of bands that sound like Fugazi and they're going to get on bigger labels because Fugazi won't go on bigger labels. I think that is something that is going to happen in the next six months, and so

FUEL

MIKE: I think one of the problems I have, that we have perhaps, is that we tend to, you know, for us the music that we may be borrowing from Fugazi or maybe from other D.C. bands does deeply inspire us and deeply has an effect over us, and it's something that influences us and how can we regulate what our influences are? We just try to play with as much sincerity and try to make up songs or come up with ideas that are true to how we feel and come from inside. Maybe it is a little unfortunate that perhaps we... that it's that obvious that it shows, but it's those things that influence us greatly and have an effect on us. So it comes out in what we do.

KENT: Have you yet heard that from people? Have you heard those criticisms?

MIKE: Oh, yeah. People make those. It is a valid criticism. It definitely is.

KENT: I thought the 7", with like the symbol on the inner circle, it was almost like an Ignition symbol. It was just like D.C. so much.

MIKE: That was the thing that was kind of inadvertent because we were trying to come up with something and we had a book of Japanese symbols and we were trying to come up with one that would look interesting inside the center...

AARON: And not be affected by the hole in the center.

KENT: Do you think that some of your popularity is due to Fugazi breaking the way for music like this?

MIKE: It's really hard to say, but I would say almost... I don't necessarily see us as being like popular, but if people are into it, I definitely think Fugazi and bands, any bands that are involved in the whole punk rock thing that break away from the standard



Anisq' Oyo Park, 3/25/90, photo McClard

it's a strange situation because you guys were one of the first bands to come up with a similar sound. The demo especially, I mean it's like "Wow, wait a second..." (everyone laughs)

AARON: They sound familiar.

KENT: You've already figured out what your 12" is going to be on, the label and everything? And that is?

JIM: Sixth International, which is through Rough Trade.

KENT: Do you think that (Fugazi similarities) had anything to do with them signing you?

MIKE: No, it was...

JIM: I actually work, I worked at Rough Trade so I knew they wanted to... Sixth International was this label that they always had as kind of a punk division. There was like a Mr. T Experience record and a Conflict record and one of the Scream records, it was a split record, and they wanted to... I knew, being in the company, that they wanted to restart the label, kind of relaunch it with some new bands. They got the Snuff, put that out domestic, licensed it from Orpus Playtime, and I just sent them the demo and they responded positively.

AARON: It also seemed like the kind of, not some direction or whatever, but they wanted to make a label that wasn't just a one shot label for bands. They wanted to kind of reestablish it as a kind of label that would be an outlet for the kind of music, in the vein of music or whatever, that we're doing. People that have something to say, I'm not real sure, well attitudes...

MIKE: I was going to say, also, one of the reasons we even decided to do it is because it seemed like, the guy Terrie who was involved with

organizing that, he was very involved and he seemed very sincerely interested in the lyrical content and what our whole function or purpose was as a band. It seemed like he really seemed to understand what it was all about, and so we wanted to try and support that in a way... Jim, having been involved with Rough Trade... in a way that also enables us to have influence over what kind of bands and what kind of label it will be; help give shape to it.

KENT: On a totally unrelated topic, "Take Effect" seems to be like, I think in a way, it kind of summarizes what the band is sort of all about. You know it's talking about igniting some sort of change in people. As band members, what do you feel that you do in your personal lives?

MIKE: Well, I think, personally, as individuals we, well, I can't speak for everyone, but personally I try to at least challenge a lot of these assumptions that I tend... actually challenge a lot of the assumptions that you make daily about just... to just basically be aware of what's going on and how you affect other people, how your actions affect other people, how your actions affect yourself, and be aware of that and try and make a conscious effort to revise your own behavior so you're not contributing to the oppression of someone, or so you're not contributing to an unfair situation.

AARON: There's so many levels that we can attempt to affect change, and things like that, but the most basic and real one to me is just on a personal level dealing with people who you come in contact with. I mostly just try and deal with people in a way that seems just completely logical. I can't believe people treat other people the way they do sometimes. It just seems completely illogical. So, I don't know...

MIKE: I'm not sure if what you meant was like what, in terms of affecting change... we've chosen the principle thing in our lives to be the band right now. We're dedicating ourselves to that and we could debate what the role of musicians or artists or whether art is an effective way or maybe not a most effective way of affecting change, but I don't know. I guess, it's hard, in some ways I could see there are a lot more direct ways; organizations to get involved in. Whether we could be affecting change on a more direct level, but there is this... we can't help but be drawn to the kind of passion of this medium and so

that's what we've chosen to do. I'm reassured about the whole process in that because the dynamic of the band, or whatever, in terms of dealing with each other or whatever crisis... we do try and affect change in terms of ourselves in this small community of four people, and the problems of dealing with each other. We're conscious of that, and we're conscious of trying to improve that in ourselves, and hopefully with the message in the lyrics we'll in some way contribute to that in others as well.

KENT: You guys are also involved in things up in San Francisco, the Gilman, and other things to build community there. You're still involved with the Gilman aren't you?

MIKE: Not recently, the band has been taking more and more time. In the past we've been more involved with Blacklist, Maximum RockNroll, Gilman...

KENT: I mean my main question would be, I guess, if someone came up to you and said, "Well that's great, but what can I do, what could I do?" What would you offer people? I mean maybe that's more than you should ask from a band, but I don't know. If I came up and said, "Wow, that was a great song, what would you suggest I do in my life?"

AARON: It's hard to say because not everybody's cut out to do every kind of... obviously there are different levels of this kind of activism kind of thing. So it's really hard to answer a question like that because you don't know.

JIM: Well, in a way I think it would be great if we all could devote time to, not like social work in terms of government programs, but like in direct activist causes; planting trees and actions like that, but at the same time I think a lot, whether our message is... the message in the lyrics being about how you can affect change by just being conscious of how your actions affect other people and just in terms of inner responsibility to that which really does in the long run produce greater actions and injustices... just to look inward a bit more.

MIKE: Or to do what, you know, if someone were to come up and say, "What should I be doing?" Do what you think will have an impact, and set that as a goal that you want to make a difference and that you want to try and affect all this system of injustice and bullshit, and affect the bullshit inside, too. To make an effort to better your condition, and so whatever means that comes through. For us we, music interests us, and we feel that we're trying to do music because that's a way that seems natural for us... comfortable for us to try to make ourselves more aware of these problems, and stuff. The whole thing of...

JIM: On one hand it's just getting people, maybe that's a cynical view, but I think there are a lot of people who are just unaware; like just at a level of consciousness and aren't aware of how they react to things and how they can affect other people, and once you get to that level of consciousness, or maybe somehow we can help bring people to that level of consciousness, then there are a billion things you can do, and in a way it's overwhelming all the different direct things you can do, but in a way maybe were trying to bring people to that level, and then they can decide what, how they can directly affect change.

KENT: Right, but it just seems that art, artists, and musicians are always bringing up problems and talking about solutions, but a lot of times that's the extent of it. I think the punk rock scene is fairly guilty of throwing around a lot of lyrics and messages and not really looking into things they can do. Sometimes bands, especially, seem to say, "Well, we're in the band and we're giving these opinions out and we don't have to do anything because this is what we are doing."

MIKE: Well, I think that I agree with you, just the whole... maybe what we're trying to do is just make applications for all these things and ideas that you expose and try to make a difference within yourself as well as in the community.

JIM: I think it's true what you say, that we can get caught up in the whole band experience and maybe at some point we'll find ourselves wanting to move in a more... affecting change at a more direct level. I guess our focus right now seems to be on the inner...

KENT: Do you think there is a point where bands can get too successful, become too big? We were obviously just talking about Fugazi in that situation, but do you see a limit to what Fuel could become? Or is it something that you really haven't dealt with at this time? What happens when Chuck Landis calls you up and asks you to play the Country Club or when it comes to where you can't play anywhere, but there? That's happened in San Francisco to quite a few bands it seems like, and I don't see why it won't happen to you.

AARON: I don't know, I mean I've never totally put it in perspective and I don't know, but I think bands that do get in that situation, if they decide that they want to continue still being a band, it seems that the



The Red Barn, 8/5/90, photo McClard

way to do it is to try and be as creative as possible; creating whatever kind of event they're going to be playing at. They're in the kind of position to draw these kind of people and not just go along with the standard kind of rock and roll show, and just fall into the standard big show.

JIM: I mean, it is something that we have discussed amongst ourselves and are trying to keep aware of and just keep perspective, well, not lose perspective on the band, and, I don't know, like Maximum Rocknroll has gotten to a level where it's a success. It can draw a profit, but instead, even though it's a huge thing, all these things have evolved out of it. It has successfully expanded without losing its perspective. Hopefully, there's not a lot of examples to go by, to argue that, but hopefully bands could do a similar thing.

MIKE: And I think the way to do is just to try to support people who... just like playing free shows in Santa Barbara, you just try to keep that as a goal. Your goal isn't necessarily to make money and it isn't to... the goal isn't to make money and the goal isn't to draw the biggest crowd. Perhaps the goal is to try and stick by the ideals you are advocating and that means for us supporting people who are doing their own thing and they are just trying to not necessarily make a business out of punk rock.

KENT: Do you think that punk rock has become a business?

MIKE: I think on certain levels it definitely has. Just the fact that...

AARON: Just the collectability of like the 7" market is pretty insane.

KENT: On another topic, I know Mike is in other bands, are you guys in other bands also?

JIM: I am, yeah.

KENT: Do you think that being in other bands at one time is a good thing for the scene? I think on one sense it stifles the amount of people that can participate. I know, at least around here, there are a lot of bands that have members that are interchangeable and those are the bands that get the shows because they have members who are in bigger bands. These new bands are instantly able to play. So I always wonder when I see bands that have interchangeable members whether that is healthy.

MIKE: I think, for me personally, it would be a matter where there are different, even with what I do with Fuel or what I do with Sawhorse, there are different modes of expression. There's a different message or a different kind of motivation behind each project, and I think I have the time or I have had the

time to try and pour as much energy into expressing myself through music as possible; put as much energy as possible into it. So it has just lead to playing with a lot of different projects. But I definitely see it becoming... the down side of it is that... I don't know if I would necessarily see it as, I mean I see your point, like people... the guy is in a big band so any other project he is involved with, to a certain extent, they're going to get all the big shows. Also, I see the down side being that you don't maybe... at a certain point you're not able to put as much energy into... you're kind of spreading yourself thin, and it's really easy to get caught up in doing that. You're not able to put as much energy or feeling into your original projects as you would like to.

JIM: I think with these cases it's not a, it sounds like you're describing with some of those bands is that in a way the music is interchangeable, too, like you have a spin off bands and you're doing more of the same thing.

KENT: D.C. is a classic example. It's the inner circle of the... continually the same people create the same bands and they're always good, which is good because they are great bands, but at some point there should be a lot more people involved possibly.

JIM: I thought you were talking more about Southern California.

KENT: Yeah, that too, but I think so many scenes are guilty of that.

The Red Bam, 8/5/90, photo McClard



You can go anywhere and see two or three bands one night and there will be like one member that floats through all of them, and it's a strange experience. Also, at this point there are a lot of project records that have been coming out. Like one time kind of things, which is also strange. I don't know...

The question kind of vanished into air...

KENT: A lot of the stuff that you're dealing with, you mentioned sexism and racism quite a few times tonight. Those have become like catch phrases for a lot of bands...

MIKE: Exactly, exactly.

KENT: How do you feel about that?

MIKE: Well, I feel as guilty as anyone tonight, just because, well you know that's the whole thing you try to get yourself... you reach certain peaks or plateaus or levels where you are able to express yourself at a certain level and it's like you try to reach that, you know? It's not always consistent, sometimes it's really difficult and I think, I mean if you're trying as hard as you can then that's the important thing; if you're

trying to express yourself as hard as you can. I would say that when it's not a matter of expression and it doesn't come with any sincerity, it's just the traditional thing to do, and all these other bands have said "Yeah, sexism is bad. Racism is bad." If you're not saying that with any sincerity or application to your own life then that's totally sad, and I think that's lead to a lot of the whole commercialism of punk because not enough people are doing what they're doing with sincerity or are trying to apply it to themselves.

JIM: Well, I guess it is also the age of the band again, just in terms of influences and musical style, which I think early on were a little more derivative and we're trying to grow into our own and lyrically, hopefully, they are themes that have, you know, influenced us, and we want to express them as well, and hopefully the depth will just grow with time.

KENT: Do you think that you can ever affect people on issues like that because of music? Maybe that's part of the problem, we talk so much about it, but they are things that are so ingrained. Is it really possible to ever make a dent in the process of how these tendencies are created in society?

MIKE: I do think by becoming conscious of them you can. I don't think we have predetermined temperaments. I think it is something that once you're conscious of it... I think punk rock lyrics have

affected me in that way, just things you haven't considered.

It's not that you're conditioned in a particular way; in a way you're just ignorant or innocent and you come across the lyrics that you haven't thought of in that perspective...

At this point we took a break.

KENT: Is there something you want to say?

MIKE: I was just going to say, throughout this whole interview I know personally that I've never felt totally confident with the way I've expressed myself, but that's just another theme of the band or another goal of the band. To personally achieve a level where I am expressing myself, where I am communicating, and feeling... communicating feelings... communicating what I am going through and having someone somehow relate to that and somehow be affected by that, I think, that's great. I think in any situation people can relate to certain human conditions or similar feelings you're having... Exactly, even what I am doing now by stopping and not finishing what I am saying and stuff. It's because I'm having... there's a frustration to not being able to express myself, and not being able to concisely put down, get down what I'm trying to say, and I think that is a goal to try to get people, other people to at least address the issue that you need to try to communicate as best you can and that within myself, I need to try, or we all need to try to communicate as best we can. That's a very

difficult task and it's something that needs to be dealt with. That's the root of a lot of problems and a lot of misunderstandings.

KENT: Do you think, on the subject of communication, it seems to me that there is a lot of communication in terms of magazines and in terms of lyrics, but other than that a lot of times that's almost all there is. You go to a punk rock show and basically a band plays and they say some really cool things while they play and they sing some good lyrics, and then a lot of times that's the extent of what's going on. There's not much else. Do you think in some way music is stifling to communication, that maybe because it becomes a focal point as opposed to expressing opinions?

MIKE: I don't know, I think there are different methods of expression or communication. I think music is definitely an artistic method and I think maybe this is relating to what you're saying, it just seems to me that I don't necessarily see how, I mean I see how it can become... I think there is something far beyond that... actually expressing yourself. Just the bridge that can be built when two people connect, when say you connect with something you read in the lyrics or you talk with someone and you're communicating what's going on inside. The person is just like... the fact that were all human we can all relate to these... we have similar experiences, we can all relate to these things on a certain level. And just the fact that when that bond is made there is something really special and that's something that is really inspiring. That's something, I know personally, that's the thing that inspires me to make any difference or do anything or even go on trying to make sense out of things. Ideally that's what music, what I feel the whole purpose of it being, I don't necessarily see it having any value if it's just entertainment. It has to have something more than that or at least be on a higher level.

KENT: I mean, that's all definitely all true, but in terms of a barrier it would be impossible to try to get forty people to go to some place and not play music, and just go and communicate on a non-musical level, I mean, like as people we in general have a difficult time communicating and the music sometimes maybe, it's like an easy way of doing it, but it's not necessarily as effective as a group of people discussing something. Never could you have gotten that many people together at the Red Barn to discuss some issues. There had to be some other thing that wasn't quite as intense.

MIKE: Oh, I see what you're saying. Well, hopefully then maybe music then serves as like a first step in getting people to get together. To first maybe address that there is a problem, maybe even come to a realization, "Wow, I never really thought about this as being a problem." And then when you get to that point the whole thing maybe will initiate an urge to discuss problems or even think about them or consider them; consider issues and try to discuss them and communicate with other people.

KENT: On a totally different subject, I know in the past you've said comments to the people in the audience about audience reactions, like what they're doing or what's going on. Do you think in this day and age that the traditional punk rock reaction of like dancing and diving and just like aggression, do you think that is something that's time has come and gone? Or maybe it should, not that it is going to go away, but maybe there comes a point where we should try to build something different?

MIKE: Yeah, I think obviously if it's just blind aggression. I mean, I think dancing, if you're expressing yourself physically I think that's fine just as long as that doesn't, practice what we advocate, infringe on other people. You know, if your dancing around is going to kick someone's head in, then it is ridiculous. I mean, it is totally hypocritical, so I think that definitely would be the case, but I don't see anything wrong with expressing yourself physically.

KENT: Yeah, definitely.

MIKE: I just stress that because I know some people take that stance.

KENT: From my point of view, it's like you go to a Gilman show and if there are a lot of people running around in a circle, it's not so much that they are bothering other people, but they're taking up space that maybe other people might utilize. It seems sometimes that shows become very ritualized, in that sense.

MIKE: Oh, totally.

KENT: Have you had shows where you felt like you should stop playing?

MIKE: Yeah, actually a couple of shows maybe. I can't totally remember, but I think there's been instances where we have stopped

playing. In Tucson there was some stuff going on and we stopped playing.

KENT: Do you think that's a role that a band should be responsible for?

MIKE: Personally, I think that's one of the ways you can try and take yourself off of being on stage or being on a pedestal by reacting with the audience and being a part of it and knowing what's going on, and not just playing the sound track for people to beat the shit out of each other or hurt other people, and not getting caught up in your own expression on stage that you're not aware of other people, that you're not aware of what they have to offer as an audience, and the fact that it is really a privilege to have people listen to what you say. I definitely see that as a role.

KENT: Before you mentioned that music shouldn't simply be entertainment, do you think that, it's so rare, bands rarely, they might give a little bit of time to what they're talking about, do you think the majority of bands have become entertainment? I would almost make that accusation?

MIKE: Yeah, I see a lot of them as being entertainment. I know in a lot of instances it is hard to try to express myself to a group of people. It's one of the hardest things I have ever done. It's very difficult, and it's very easy to just go "well rather than ramble on about nonsense, I'm just going to play the song." So it's really easy to get caught up in that. So I don't know, I think that's one of the interesting things about punk rock. There's so many bands that operate in this whole alternative community that have such different goals and intentions. For some it might just be to get people to act goofy or whatever the purpose of the band might be. A band like Isocracy, their intention wasn't

to get people to necessarily think about things, but to not be so tough and act silly for a little bit. So I mean, I don't know, it's hard to say where a band just becomes entertainment, becomes detrimental to what's going on in the whole community.

KENT: Returning to an older topic, at this point a lot of bands and a lot of labels are making, not a lot of money, but they are making money off of the whole punk rock thing, do you think that, I mean there are a lot of people that would say that nobody should be making anything, what do you think about that?

MIKE: I don't know, personally I kind of have a problem with people who... I mean I understand the whole rationalization by saying "well, if you make enough to survive off the music then you're able to put more time into it and more energy into it..."

AARON: But also I understand the concept of making a profit so you can continue to do things, and expand, and be privileged to put out other things, but I don't... It's something that is hard to deal with.

MIKE: Well, I think for me personally, I can't ever see making a career, I'm not in music to make a career out of it. It's because of something that's totally separate from that, it's something that's a need, and that need comes out of the fact that I don't spend all my time doing music and I don't spend all my time expressing myself totally clearly to everyone, and I don't have that opportunity. That's why it kind of perpetuates itself. I am able to do that because of all that.



gonna live the life i advocate
gonna live the life
it's not too late

The Red Barn, 8/5/90, photo McClard

KENT: It would be a totally different experience if that's what you had to do for your livelihood.

MIKE: Yeah, and for me, personally, the way I look at it I see the most idealistic stuff from people who are... I can understand trying to make it so that you're not losing a lot of money, and I can understand that, but it just seems to me that if you have like... you also get yourself into a trap where I have to... I'm depending, in order for me to do this music I have to do... I'm making money off of it and it's my full time thing. For me to maintain this time to make music I have to sell. So that becomes your principle goal, your goal is sales, not whatever the purpose or function of the music is. So it seems like if your goal is to do music or

something else like making money being more important of a goal then what you're actually trying to do then it seems kind of senseless, or what becomes your main goal obviously is to make money. The other goals are subordinate to that.

KENT: Since you signed to Rough Trade, how do you feel about the fact that there are a lot of people who work there that are making their living because they are putting out your record?

MIKE: I know personally it's really weird for me. I haven't totally dealt with that on my own... solidified how I feel on that. I'm just trying to deal with that or to at least acknowledge that as an issue that needs to be dealt with or thought about at least.

KENT: I mean, it's true if you put out a record you obviously pay the pressing plant, so it's ridiculous to say that you can avoid it on a certain level, but it's like the pyramid just gets bigger, bigger, and bigger.

When you start having p.r. people who are going to lay out your ads for

you, that's their job, and there's people who are going to answer the phone and talk to radio people for you, at what point is that good and bad?

MIKE: It's really a difficult question to deal with.

KENT: It just seems like something that isn't being dealt with anymore. It seems like punk rock is just... the whole Do It Yourself concept is all over. I mean, every band if they could would love to have someone else put out their record and just tour and whatever. It's going away rapidly.

MIKE: Yeah, but I don't know because at the same time, just like getting back from the tour we just went on, you meet people all over though... it's weird... you could say it might be going away, but in a way it's almost like a certain... the stuff that had faulty foundations to start with has just kind of phased itself out. You know, people who didn't necessarily have the best intentions,

the extent of what they're doing is it is just becoming this money making thing to them and I think at the same time the fact that there are all these problems and things to be dealt with, and that there are a lot of people... it is really inspiring because they're doing their own thing and they're like... it's weird... maybe a progression or an evolution...

KENT: Well, I can't really think of anything else. If you want to make a final statement then that's fine. Does anyone else have anything that they would like to ask?

JAMEY (The Fanzone That Had No Name): Do you think as a whole that the country, or the culture is at a turning point where some kind of change is needed, and if so what do you think are three of the main things that need to be changed the most, and possibly also what are some ways that people could go about them or you could go about them?

MIKE: Well, that's kind of what we talked about earlier.

JAMEY: Ok, yeah, but except about talking about sexism and racism, unless that is your answer, what are things that are on a national level or even just on a cultural level that need to be faced?

AARON: Yeah, I agree with you that there are definitely things that need to be faced. I think one of the main, the biggest problem is the family structure. That's basically how people come to their ideas, as well as by society and things like that. People just need to take a lot more time and put a lot more thought into raising their children.

JAMEY: So you think people just need to change their attitudes?

AARON: No, I don't think that's the flat idea at all. I'm thinking that that is one of the few ways... You said sexism, racism, and things like that, that's something that doesn't seem to be addressed. A lot of the reason people are the way they are is because the family system, structure is dysfunctional.

JAMEY: How do you think it is breaking down? What do you think it is not accomplishing that it should?

AARON: I just think that people don't communicate with their children. They don't show them...

JAMEY: You mean parents not talking to their kids?

AARON: Yeah, I think that's part of it.

JOHN (Reality Control): One of the things it might come down to is the parents not knowing themselves.

AARON: Yeah, I think that's one of the big things. People don't really have a grasp on what their ideas are and what they're all about, and then they get into a situation where they have children. How can they expect to teach this other little person who is getting all this information...

KENT: Do you feel, as a band do you feel... it's almost like we are interrogating you? Obviously you're only human, you're just other people, do you think because you're in a band you become... people look to you as more than what you are as people? I mean no one comes up to me and asks me these kind of questions.

MIKE: In a way it is totally fucking difficult, but in a way it's fucking great to have people call you on your shit because it is just so easy to assume that you have all these answers and that all this stuff is solidified, and then it really puts you on the spot where you have to clearly state and clearly express what you are saying to someone else, and basically express what you are saying in the context of this interview or whatever. It's a total test, but it's great because it makes you just think about it and it makes you deal with it. It is totally difficult.



too terrified to try...
sometimes i feel that way too
but it's time we act upon all we've said

The Red Barn, 8/5/90, photo McClard

Punk rock in America always claims to be so radical, but the reality may very well be far from that. Man Lifting Banner is indeed radical, and they are not from America. It is doubtful if a similar band could exist here. That in itself is very important. Aside from that, Man Lifting Banner is a powerful band musically, as well as lyrically. Whether you agree or disagree with their opinions is somewhat irrelevant, the fact that they have them is very relevant. - Kent

KENT: Why did you change the band name from Profound to Man Lifting Banner?

MICHEL: I was fed up with the old name, I really don't know why. It was just really pretentious sounding, but, you know, really hard to explain. The meaning behind it wasn't that clear to people. This is where I think that Man Lifting Banner is a lot more self-explanatory, besides being original and totally cool. But at the time when we changed the name, I don't know, I can't give a clear explanation. I just wasn't satisfied with it anymore.

BURT: Profound didn't seem such a profound name at all, a bit too generic maybe. In fact any other name would be better. Then we suddenly found a picture in a Russian art book called, "Man Lifting Banner," it shows the centerpiece of the Triptych "The Communists" from Ghelii Korzhev. The scene shows a man literally lifting a red banner which has been dropped by his fallen comrade. Really impressive. We thought it to be a fitting name for the resolution we pretend to have.

KENT: Your lyrics seem to combine straight edge themes with political concepts, but do you think that the two topics are that mixable?

MICHEL: I don't think we really carry any typical straight edge values in our songs. We actually have only one straight edge song, "X's For Respect," that's all. I'm sick to death of all those straight edge bands with their complacency. When something becomes a trend, it will lose its creativeness, it's initiative. Straight edge has become all image and no content. Buy ten straight edge records, look at ten straight edge ads, it fucking shows. I hope this will be over soon so the serious, the sincere will stay. I'm not interested in writing about friendship, fake unity, etc... I don't want to dwell in some complacent attitude. There are real problems, I face them. Only losers stay away. Most straight edgers are just a bunch of cowards. They change and speak out only to a safe level. If they go beyond that... It's sick, I mean what's the use of being aware when awareness doesn't show on a political or social level. They're just cowards and I'm not interested in sticking on that level. Maybe politics and straight edge don't mix, but I am straight edge and I am aware of the real problems. If people can't take that, then that's there problem, not mine.

OLAV: I think there's only a political approach. Within that approach there are things like straight edge, vegetarianism, etc... I think it's stupid only to sing about straight edge. You can only solve problems in society on a political level. But if you want to call straight edge an approach then I would say, "Yes, they mix."

BURT: Yeah, we hardly have any straight edge songs, most songs are social, political, or personal. Fact is that all Man Lifting Banner members are straight edge, although one might believe it to be more important than the others. You could see the band as a political band of which the members happen to be straight edge. I don't really see straight edge and politics as two separate things. They are kind of related I guess.

MICHEL: Yeah, I think straight edge and politics, even straight edge and communism, fit together really well.

BURT: Really isn't it stupid to care about not doing drugs while at the same time not giving a fuck about politics?

Take, for instance, McDonalds. We boycott them from a vegetarian point of view, but at the same time we don't forget about the way they're exploiting the Third World. That's the political aspect of it.

KENT: Did the name change reflect a change in direction? For instance, a move away from the straight edge image to a more political image?

OLAV: Well, the change of name is because a lot of people thought we were a limited straight edge band, which Profound never was, but nevertheless, some people thought that. So we thought, maybe change our name, because we want to be seen as a political/social band. That's what punk/hardcore means to us; being politically aware.

MICHEL: I don't think it has anything to do with the change of name. If we had been satisfied with Profound, then we would have travelled the same road. I do think that Man Lifting Banner represents our political attitude better than Profound. In that way you might be right.

BURT: We always had a political approach, even as Profound. The new name just fits better to the meaning of the band.

KENT: Do you think your straight edge songs are as important as your political songs?

MICHEL: I guess I gave a response to this question earlier on, the more I repeat straight edge songs the more trivial they become. Political songs are more important, though it is also possible to combine the two.

BURT: Yeah, political songs are more important, although, as pointed out before, I don't see both topics as two separate things.

OLAV: In the end it all comes down to your political beliefs... If you really care about this world. If you want to be an apolitical dick, that's fine, but that's not what I want.

KENT: It seems that the straight edge philosophy is easily adapted to fit the Krishna religion, as can be seen by its rising popularity. Do you think that there is a religious aspect to straight edge that makes it compatible with Krishna consciousness?

MICHEL: The question is a little bit confusing, I have no doubt that there is a distinguishable difference between the two. I guess what you want to know is what I think about the Krishna movement trying to integrate in the hardcore scene. Well, I read some Krishna stuff and some secondary information, both positive and negative, but I don't think I am able to judge all of it. Krishna as I see it is both negative and positive. Their positive sides: anti-materialism, anti-greed. Their negative sides are more, they look down on women, most of them look down on homosexuals. Their way of reasoning, their strong belief in destination, I guess the whole negative side of it is that the whole Krishna belief, to me, comes off as a drug. It leads people away from reality into the unprovable (Yeah, I know, the book was written 5,000 years ago and its prophesy's always come true...) it leads people to acceptance of the negative (exploitation, inhumanity, etc.), just like most other religions. It's easy for us to see Third World starvation as punishment, a logical consequence, it provides us with a shield so we don't have to see the blame that's pointed at us. I don't see what Krishna has to do with straight edge, I don't believe a lot of these Krishna straight edgers would have been like that if there hadn't been Ray 2 Day. It just shows that they're totally ignorant, always looking for a guider and afraid to guide oneself. I don't say that Ray's an asshole, I've talked with him sometimes and he's a really caring person, but I don't think he is changing for the better now. Krishna devotees don't control themselves, they are controlled, that was what straight edge was opposed to... back in the old days.

KENT: You seem to stress the Do It Yourself attitude a lot. "No Compromise" and "Bow For The Bucks" both address that. Is the D.I.Y. attitude that important?

MICHEL: Okay, "Bow For The Bucks" is a song about sell out bands and D.I.Y. (Do It Yourself). "No Compromise" might be applied to this topic, but its actually about something else. It's about political sell out. I think that what one of the reasons why hardcore is more than music

or fashion is the D.I.Y. attitude. It's an issue that's being attacked from every side. Never have there been so many (straight edge) bands selling out to major labels. I think that if you want the scene to expand then you have to gain strength. Put the money you gain back into the scene, and build a strong independent distribution. Of course, there are people like Dan Zero Mahony, who think that one can expand by the use of major labels. Well, big business has really fucked him over, but why should he care? He joined their ranks anyway. My god, I laughed my lungs out when I read his first column in Maximum Rock'N'roll. What's a Thought Crusade? Putting out an album in Europe on a metal label with no lyric sheet, stealing money from people who order Hard Stance (a totally great band by the way) records, not writing back when asked for an explanation, appearing on a needless live compilation with N.Y.'s most sexist band, Rest In Pieces? Tell me, baby! I've never seen a reason to sell out. I don't want the money. Their money is blood money. There's nothing good in capitalism. It should be kept out of the scene. Why sell all your integrity? Thank god there are "big" bands like Verbal Assault that do give a fuck; it's more than music. I don't think black and white, but there's only one truth, hardcore should stay out of big business, tell me what good did it bring?

BURT: D.I.Y. is the only way to keep our scene together. Aren't the basics of hardcore about doing it yourself? Hardcore becomes nothing more than just another music genre when it loses the D.I.Y. attitude. It's the point where capitalism can impose its greedy attitude on us. A true hardcore band, to me, can never be on a major label because as told before the basic of hardcore is against it. Integrity (political) is something that can only be found within the hardcore movement. It's something which makes our "music" more than metal, disco, or any kind of entertainment what-so-ever.

OLAV: Without the D.I.Y. attitude, punk would have died when the Sex Pistols split up. After that the big record companies were no longer interested in punk. People said it was dead. But there were people who thought, "We'll do it ourselves. We don't need them anyway." Since then punk/hardcore was done by the people involved themselves. There was total control over what people did, be it a fanzine, a band, releasing records, setting up gigs, etc... The D.I.Y. attitude is the vital foundation of this "scene." It's also hypocritical to be politically aware and anti-capitalism, while signing to a record company who invests money in all kinds of vague things like war industry, South Africa, etc...

KENT: Considering that, what do you think of all of the straight edge labels and more commercial hardcore labels such as Hawker, In-Effect, Revelation, and others who have ties to major corporations and/or who charge excessive amounts for their records?

OLAV: I don't consider them hardcore. Don't buy their records, don't go to their gigs, don't do interviews with them. Why support people like that who are killing the independent scene? Certainly people like Dan (ex-N.F.A.A.) who still defend themselves by saying it's okay to sign to a major record company... I don't have any respect for people like that. They forget that these companies are only in it for the profit. They use you, they're not involved in the thoughts behind hardcore, they're businessmen, you will just support capitalism. I get a bad taste in my mouth when I think about these labels and bands.

MICHIEL: I'm not sure about Revelation, since Jordan as far as I know no longer works together with Important, but to get back to the essence of this question, it totally sucks! But, it's not only the major labels who do that. A major part of the independent straight edge labels charge outrageous prices for records post paid air. I know from experience that it is possible to send an E.P. for \$5 airmail (to Europe). We even manage to keep the price at \$4, but, especially if you charge more than \$6, which itself is too much, you're stealing. There's no fucking excuses. There's one straight edge label which even has the nerve to



ask \$7.50 for a 7" by airmail. What's all that brotherhood/friendship shit those people are always singing about? Most of the bands/labels where I ordered didn't even send my stuff out. I'll take my chance and name some of them: Turning Point, Schism, Workshed Records, Sk8 Edge, Step Forward, One World, etc, etc... They treat tons of people like that. They steal, they lie, I don't give a fuck about their straight edge, their calls for unity and friendship, fuck them! If I had the money I would sue them one on one. Scares you, huh!?

BURT: Well, all these labels who sell their products for ridiculous prices prove they lack the real hardcore spirit. When talking about straight edge labels, I guess they're examples of those who see straight edge just as drug free.

MICHIEL: They only see straight edge as a lucrative business. They are fake.

BURT: Hardcore records, straight edge or not, should be low priced, according to the D.I.Y. standard.

KENT: Do you really believe that violence is an effective way of dealing with racists? Is that not reverting to their mind-set?

BURT: Racism in its essence is oppression. If there are people who are attracted to this philosophy, we have to teach them a lesson. If words won't do it, our fists will. This sounds like some tough guy talk and maybe it is, but most of these people are so determined and convinced (although in fact they are nothing but insecure) that only physical resistance can show them that there are people who are fighting and who will always fight their views. Most of these fuckers will laugh at you in the face when you approach them with arguments. What we're trying with Man Lifting Banner is to urge people to literally stand up against racism and to convince them that "action speaks louder than words!"

OLAV: Violence is the only answer they'll understand. I mean, kicking a Nazi in his balls is politically correct. I just don't tolerate fascists and racists. One day you'll have to make up your mind, you can't always walk away from it. What would you say to someone who's been stabbed in the back because of the color of his skin? That you think violence against fascists/racists is just another form of oppression? Well, I won't. There are just a few things in this world which you can solve through talking. Skinheads are not interested in discussion, they want trouble. When you fight them, then they might get the message and then you might talk. But, as far as I can see now, violence towards fascists and racists is the only solution.

MICHIEL: I've seen people who tried to talk to Nazi skins, all they got was a kick in the head. I don't see people who celebrate racism and Adolf Hitler as human beings. They don't have to be treated like that. I think that I can use violence when truth is on my side. I don't think there is any sane human being that wants to doubt that truth. There's no reason for racism or fascism. Both are enemies of mankind.

BURT: Yeah. There are people who claim that violence itself can never solve problems. Does that mean that we should sit back and do nothing about it? History should be a lesson!

MICHIEL: Should the people in South Africa let the government kill their children? What is pacifist resistance? That means nothing, it doesn't solve much. It's not a game we're playing. It's fucking war on racism. Look at France, there they gave the racists their democratic rights, result: 30-60% of the votes at local elections, killing of immigrants for no reason, racist views adapted by conservative and even social-democratic parties. That's what happens if arguments are your only weapon. Pacifism might be great, but it must not be an excuse to chicken out.

KENT: There are quite a few references to Marx and Marxist ideology in your material, would you consider Man Lifting Banner to be a communist band?

MICHIEL: To the extent that some, or most of us are to be considered communists, but be a little careful with calling us a communist band. We are a band with communist sympathies. We're not to be considered totally

dogmatic in that sense.

BURT: Man Lifting Banner definitely has strong communist beliefs and sympathies. Each member might have a different view on the details, but generally speaking we agree on the basic idea, which is equality for all, REAL equality.

MICHIEL: Real brother and sisterhood.

OLAV: We're all thinking along the lines of Marxism, which means we want a society based on equality and social justice. People must have control over their own lives. Society has to be controlled by the people, not by businessmen.

KENT: How do you respond to the accusation that Marxism is dead now that reform is sweeping through Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union? Or would you agree with the claim that those countries were not Marxist or communist countries in the first place?

MICHIEL: That's the general feeling, yeah. It proves nothing though. The system that's disbanded in Eastern Europe is nothing more than state capitalism, that's not a cheap excuse from my side, it's just the way it is. How can one compare the legacy of Stalinism with communism or socialism? The system that fell was nothing more than post-feudalism with a socialist sauce. I still believe in Marxism, although I have some critical remarks on its ideas. Nicaragua could have been a good example of successful adaption of socialism. U.S. intervention brought it down though. The crimes of capitalism outnumber any other crimes committed against mankind. When will that be brought out into the open?

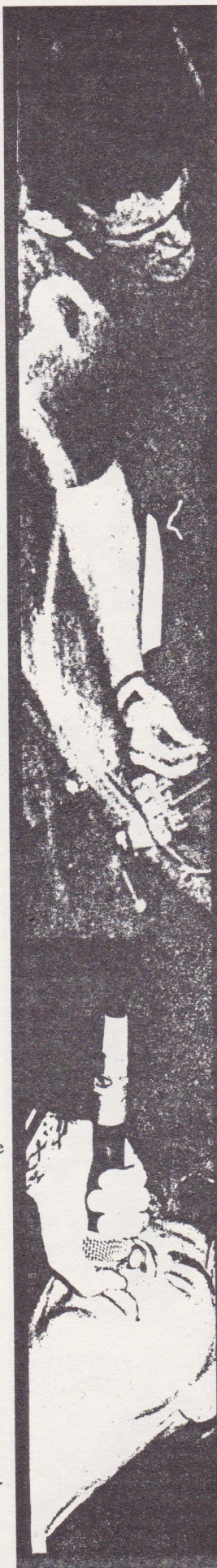
BURT: Marxism/communism certainly is not dead. I see it this way: There are people who live under the flag of capitalism, who thus live by the means of greed and thus only have one goal in life—being rich and being number one. There are, though, other people who don't simply give in to that "human greed" and who still have some real ideals: A world where everyone is equal and where oppression (capitalism) has been destroyed. Now, at the moment, the so-called communist world is going through some changes because in the past quite some things happened which were wrong and didn't have anything to do with the idea of communism. As always the capitalist Western World (starter of the Cold War) takes its chance and declares the "Commie World" as dead. But we should know better. Capitalism is the easy way. Just because things are changing in the Eastern Block, it doesn't mean that communism is dying. It's not as simple as capitalism always wants it to be. Communism is about ideals and these are still strong! In the Eastern Block they might be weakened, but let's not forget communism world wide, which changed a lot for the better and still has lots of participants. You can't kill idealism!

OLAV: The U.S.S.R. and the other Eastern Block countries were never "Marxist" countries. They were trying to build a socialist society, a goal which they never achieved. On one side, because of Stalinism, a lot of people in power are Stalinists or at least conservative, not in favor of progress within the party, and, on the other side, because Western countries were more or less boycotting them so they were never able to really develop their society towards socialism. The Marxist theory is not dead, on the contrary, it will prove its right in the future when Eastern European countries see that capitalism is not everything.

KENT: There is the traditional dispute between those that argue for a revolutionary approach to socialism/communism, and those who seek socialism/communism through democratic reform. Which direction do you see as most effective?

OLAV: The democratic reform method only works when you have an elected majority behind you, when not, it does not work. Since I don't see that that will happen... If you really want a Marxist society... Revolution is the only way. Marxism doesn't fit in this so-called democratic society. Look at the Social Democrats, they betray all their voters. Real changes are only achievable through revolutions.

BURT: At the moment I don't think that revolution could



work. Workers have to start it, but in many countries they're not class conscious at all; they are blinded by capitalism and are very much concerned about eating themselves to death and having a car just like the neighbors have. I guess capitalism has to suck the people dry even more to finally open their eyes and move their asses to kill it. But on the other hand, getting a big party together, existing of so-called left-wing groups, thus making compromises, and then participating in elections will certainly not be the way. You might get more votes, but will it change anything? I don't think so. We don't need more votes and concessions, but more class consciousness, so... once a revolution?

MICHIEL: I don't believe in the democratic reform method. There's no big popular support for a Marxist reform. I think this support will rise, but I don't think I will live to see the day of democratic socialist reform. Although, I would prefer such reform, I don't think it will happen. I no longer believe in the inevitability of a change according to Marxist lines, but I do believe in the necessity of this change. If we're not gonna change real soon, change might be too late. Either this world will be killed through environmental destruction or war. Another possibility is a new fascist regime throughout Europe. Nationalism and Neo-Nazism are gathering incredible momentum. I think the only solution to these problems is a socialist revolution. Capitalism is a system which is self-destructive. Capitalism has been victorious for such a long time because it's based on the evil side of man, on greed, selfishness, hate, etc... This system, which is based on "living at the cost of others," kills. Look at the Third World exploitation, the weapon industry, the drug mafia, etc... Until now we've been able to push the debts beyond our borders. But, what goes around, comes around. We'll end up paying if we don't erase injustice, if we don't get ourselves back in balance. Democracy's not going to solve anything. We'll have to change by force. Show the people their responsibilities. Build a system which is based on the good side of man, on unity, solidarity, equality, brotherhood and sisterhood. Work together instead of against each other.

KENT: Do you think a socialist revolution will really occur?

MICHIEL: I'm not a prophet and I'm not too optimistic about it. Capitalism, as I explained earlier is strong, stronger and more flexible than most socialists believed it to be. Suppose things do get out of hand in Disneyland, our leaders will encourage drugs, religion, racism and fascism. Capitalism doesn't need "democracy" to survive. But as with all evil, it bears the seeds of its own destruction. Problem with capitalism is that collapse will mean collapse of planet earth. If we don't want it to happen, we'll have to stop it while we can. The way I see it is that we need a socialist revolution to survive. What goes around comes around they say, and that's so terribly true. If we continue hating and killing and exploiting, we'll get our share when the time is there. But if we learn to love, if we learn to appreciate true friendship, brother and sisterhood, then we'll get something else on our plates, peace and love in our time...

KENT: What authors or books would you recommend to someone who wants to know more about socialist thought? Besides the obvious choices such as Marx, Lenin, and Engels.

BURT & MICHIEL: We'll have a small book stand on our "Put communism back on the map" tour. You can choose the finest titles there. We also trade for Krishna works. No, serious how, some suggestions are: Trotsky, Che Guevara, Isaac Deutscher, etc... A good introduction to socialist and communist ideologies is Marxism and Communism by Robert V. Daniels (Random House). Biographies and works on great socialist thinkers are more fun to read than their own works, which might be somewhat boring. Our tour will feature Warzone and Y.D.L. as support acts. You wouldn't believe what good this reeducation camp in Alma-Ata did to them. "Rocking

Hard For Communism..." Problem is that their lyrics are hard to understand, they switched to Russian.

KENT: What about anarchism. There is always conflict between anarchists and communists. Are they compatible or only oppositional?

MICHEL: I'm not going to tell you where in Marxist theory the two come together, I'm not a firm believer in just theories. I think that anarchy could never work out on a large scale. I don't oppose anarchism as a life style, but I don't think that it will be anarchy that leads us out of this fucked situation. We do have to conquer authority. That is a step every anarchist will oppose, their reasons for it are somehow understandable. The way to communism, as it showed in a lot of so-called socialist countries, is hard... power corrupts. To make it right this time, we not only have to fight the ruling class, we have to fight ourselves, we have to fight our own evils. How can you create communism, if you haven't changed yourself, your ties to complacency, greed, hate, violence, etc... Both for anarchy and communism to work out, you have to gain control over your negative senses, that's where I see straight edge fitting right in.

KENT: In "Push To Start" you make references to gay rights. Do you think that is an issue that hardcore should address, and do you think hardcore can come to terms with that issue?

MICHEL: I think it's really important. I don't see why people judge people for the way they were born: Black, white, yellow, man, woman, lesbian or homo. It's stupid. Even in the hardcore scene there's still a lot of prejudice, especially toward gays. Gays need support, we try to give that. There's so many losers who always get down on minorities, that's the safe way. We try to confront the cowards. I don't think we'll be able to ban it from the hardcore scene 100%, but if more and more people speak out against homophobia then we might come close to it.

BURT: Of course, this is an important issue. There's still a lot of prejudice against gays. In a broader sense, the song could be seen as an anti-sexist song because homophobia is just another form of sexism. It tells men and women how to be: Men should be muscular and have big dicks (and have a tan, Hi Slam!), etc... Women should shut up and do the dishes. So what if a man loves a man, or a woman a woman?! It's up to them, isn't it? People who put down gays are plain sexist and should wise up or leave the scene.

OLAV: A lot of hardcore kids still have this stupid macho attitude. I think it's important to sing about these kind of things. Homosexuality is still some kind of forbidden thing to sing about. It's not tough enough, you know. That's also what Marxism is all about. Equal rights for everybody, including gays.

KENT: Why do you think that hardcore is so male dominated?

MICHEL: When I speak for the scene that I feel part of, I can't really come up with a good reason. I don't feel there's room for sexism in our scene. Generally speaking, (this doesn't go for our scene, where the girls are involved) most of the girls "involved" just happen to have a boyfriend who's into hardcore. When I look at this pattern, it's a direct result of the female role in society. On the other hand, hardcore is an aggressive form of music, and the slam dance, stage diving, etc... don't seem to attract girls. The scene looks violent (and sometimes is) and tough. It's really weird though, now I'm speaking from my own experience... Hardcore as I live(d) it, is a music scene that's the most caring, loving and unsexist of all, but it attracts less women. Why then are so many girls attracted to all-out sexist music scene's like metal and rap? I don't see hardcore at fault here. Sure we have sexist bands and people in the scene and each one of them is one too many, but hardcore is what you make it. If your local scene doesn't fit in here, try to reach people that do care, I'm sure they're there... communicate.

KENT: On a political topic, what do you think about the reunification of Germany?

BURT: The reunification of Germany means the opportu-



nity for (extreme) right wing forces to unite and become stronger. This is one of the "beautiful" aspects of the wall breakdown. Another great thing is that Western markets have another area to sell their stuff and make lots of profit, all in the name of a healthy economy, in fact these are the so-called pro's that reunification will bring, but what real change is there for the people? The opportunity to travel might be there finally, but social securities are taken away in the name of a free market economy, prices go up, and unemployment will rise. Let's certainly not forget the great role Germany is going to play in world politics. It's more and more becoming a dominate power and with the influence of the right wing, nationalist people in power, horrible things from the past have the chance to repeat themselves.

OLAV: Reunification in itself is not bad, I mean, less borders, that's okay. But the way it's been done... The G.D.R. (East Germany) has been sold to West Germany in a very bad way, and much too fast. The G.D.R. had to give up all their laws (a good social system, cheap transport fares), and all prices went up. They had to bow for capitalism. Nothing of the forty years of the G.D.R. is left, none of the good things... That's how capitalism works. What about the balance in Middle Europe, has it been broken? Only time can tell. I think West Germany has taken this too lightly. There will be huge unemployment in the G.D.R., and the worst part of it is that the G.D.R. has been sold away and the Soviet Union did nothing! I think that's a big political mistake. I don't want to go into the threat of a big Germany, although it might be a problem in the future when more so called old "German" country parts want to join Germany again. I hope that mistake will not be made again.

MICHEL: I'm against the reunification of Germany, actually, to speak of reunification is distorting the truth. If you speak of reunification you mean restoring Germany to the way it was in 1937. There's no justification for unification. Germany has been one state only since 1870, since that time Germany participated in three major expansive wars, of which the most known are the first and second World Wars. Unification would again mean a superior Germany. The allies wanted to prevent that from happening in the future, so they parted Germany. There's no reason to think that Germany will ever stop being an aggressive state. Germany's already infiltrating in Eastern Europe on a very big scale, economically speaking. The right wing and Neo Nazi parties are already asking for parts of Poland and Czechoslovakia. There lies no justification in the right of self-determination of the two Germanies. Of course they speak the same language, but is that enough reason to let them join together and endanger future safety? When Austria voluntarily joined Germany in 1938, was that justified? Do we have to let that happen again? Why does Western Germany want Eastern Germany to join one Germany when in 1992 all Western European countries are supposed to erase all borders. Germany just wants to be the leading nation, with the largest share in the European Monetary Union and the European parliament. Soon they'll be able to impose and force their ideas on all the other countries. The Third Reich coming true! "For those who forget the past, history will repeat itself."

KENT: Besides the band, what other projects and activities are you guys involved in?

MICHEL: I study Eastern European and Russian history at the Utrecht University and listen to Supertouch and Seein' Red.

BURT: I'm at the Academy of Arts in Utrecht doing graphic design. Big goes to school. He's famous for working at the local potato factory. Paul's unemployed, and he never cleans his room.

OLAV: Paul and I play in Seein' Red, and I'm thinking of doing a new 'zine with Paul (We've done Definite Choice in the past). I want to be more active on a political level, like in actions and demonstrations. I've been active in a club, together with Paul, but it went into some commercial business, so we stopped doing that.

THREE THINGS

these are my opinions on three very important topics. you can disagree, and i encourage you to do so
opinions are not dangerous, it is the lack of opinions that is deadly

I might be gay. I've felt love and admiration for other males. I've also felt that way about women I've made love with, and women I've been friends with. The distinction is not so clear that I can define it. It is entirely possible that the only real difference exists in social regulation. We are all so quick to claim our sexual preferences along the "normal" lines. Is it possible to really judge without a sampling of the other options? Have you never felt inclined to show physical affection to your own sex? I have experienced that impulse, and I have stifled it. Society has dictated through its sexual roles that an embarrassing situation would follow; and as we are told, embarrassment should always be avoided, even if that means altering the truth. It seems to me that the majority of people would rather lie than face the scorn of those around us. Petty people, are we not? There is always so much banter about self-worth, but the criteria seems to always remain the same. You can change the way you dress, the way you eat, the way you act, the way you think, but you cannot change your physical shape, the color of your skin, or your sexual preference. That control is not yours. We are so quick to proclaim our preferences and to separate ourselves from that which we deny. The truth is, you could be gay. So why worry about it? Why concern yourself with the things that you cannot control? It may be that all humans are both heterosexual and homosexual. Social pressure and environment may well be the deciding factor. It may be that we are born with a natural inclination for one or the other. It may be that your husband or wife or mother or daughter or sister or brother or father or lover or friend is gay. Would it really change anything if they were. Would you love them any less? Would you expect them to love you less if you were gay? Love and affection should know no boundaries. If I am gay, then I gladly accept that. I hope you would do the same for yourself, or for me, or for anyone.

Track marks lay burned in my mind. Memories hold strong and past pain and anger keeps me on fire. I've tried to put it behind and tolerate what I despise, but the fire burns in my eyes. I've said it before, but my mouth won't close, my eyes won't shut, my hate won't cool. I have the straight edge. I am straight edge. That is not all I am, but it is a part of my being. I will not shut up.

People proclaim that they are tired of hearing me wine, preach and complain. People say I am fascist. People say I have no toleration. People say I promote conformity. People cry censorship. Why are people so blind?

I will not shut up. The words I speak and the feelings I have will not evaporate under such hollow arguments. To speak one's mind is to be free. I put no limits on your actions or upon your words. I simply reserve my right to say, "Fuck you." I reserve my right to hate what you do. I force nothing upon you. I defend your right to put poison in your body, but I will never approve.

I live in a world that never lets me free of what I declare to be mindless. I will push, struggle, and fight against your views and actions just as viciously as the world forces the shit down my throat. I choke on a culture that is mired deep within waste. The advertisements promote the smoke and the liquid. The role models snort it, smoke it, drink it, swallow it, shoot it, expose it; they live it, and they die from it. I can never escape. It surrounds me. I run away, but it follows. I would love to simply say, "World, get the fuck away from me," but it never works. I will never be free. So

I ask, why should the world escape me?

Do as you please, but if you come into my space then prepare to feel my hostility. I am fueled by hate. It's been said that hate comes easy. That may be so, but ignorance and lack of conviction can breed love. Love is blind? Well, I am not blind. I cannot love what I hate. You bring it into my view, and all I can do is feel red hot anger boiling beneath my skin trying to explode. I could rip you down, and focus on the physical, but I realize the error of that path. Instead, I pour all of my feelings into my words and I lash out. Everyone has a right to speak their mind as freely as possible. I utilize that right. Would you restrict that right?

If you disagree with my views, then mould your words into a hammer and start swinging. Conflict is the fibre of human interaction. Only through conflict can we ever hope to transcend that conflict. Avoidance is no solution. Punk rock was born to give a voice to those who felt mute and stifled by their world. I will not be mute. I will not be silent. My voice is free. It will roar, and roar, and roar.

No apology is needed, and none is given.

We run around in circles, and we find ourselves standing where we began. Things change, and some things stay the same. It's been a long eight years. I've stated my views, and I've eaten my words. The story begins again. Dinner is served.

The circle storm has grown old.

I've thrown myself into the circle, and I've thrown myself from the stage. I will not deny my past. But must the future offer the same? The crux of the punk rock experience still takes place in the concert hall. That probably won't change for quite some time. However, the time has come to question the activities that occur within those walls.

Can behavior be accepted if it limits the actions of others? I no longer believe so. I've often said that people know the risks they take when they go to a punk rock show. They know about the dancing and the diving; it is a risk you take when you venture into the underground. But is this really so?

Must tradition and ritual rule forever?

I no longer believe so.

There comes a time when we must question the activities we participate in. If our activities limit the freedoms of those around us, and if our activities drive people away, then can we continue to revere those activities? It just doesn't seem in line with what we seek.

There is no doubt that the dancing and diving drives people away. It has driven me away. It drives people away.

The issue is one of space. If our actions limit the use of space then they need to be questioned. People should not be forced to suffer the abuse of those around them. If I choose to sit on the floor in front of the stage, or to simply stand in front of the stage, then I should be able to do so without fear of being bashed in by divers and slammers.

I'm not saying that people should feel unable to dance, move, and feel the energy of the moment. If you feel it then let it out in any way you please, but understand the boundaries that must exist when you share space with other people.

There comes a time when we as individuals must speak and act. There comes a time to throw your body into the fray. There comes a time to protect what you believe in. There are no rules at a show. I do not wish to make any. However, if people are free to run around in circles bashing into me, and if people are free to jump on my head, then I in turn am free to throw myself at their feet, and I am free to speak my mind, and I am free to sit on the floor. They are free to leave.

Maybe I am a wimp. If so, then I am a proud wimp. I refuse to allow my physical being to dominate my existence. Hardcore is much, much more than the physical.

Shed the physical vestiges and nurture the communal, emotional, political, and educational aspects.

Let the storm blow over...

—KENT—